

The Signs of the Times, vol. 17

ESR

Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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1891

January 5, 1891

“Exposition of 2 Corinthians 3:7-11” The Signs of the Times, 17, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

Several questions have of late been asked us upon *2 Corinthians 3:7-11*. As that is a passage which those who are striving to teach the law often find difficult to explain, and which enemies of truth use with great confidence as being opposed to the law, we will try to give a simple scriptural exposition of it. The fifth and sixth verses of the chapter read as follows:—*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.1*

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.2*

It will be noticed that the last clause of *verse 5* is an answer to the question, “Who is sufficient for these things?” asked in *verse 16* of the preceding chapter. The subject which is under consideration is the Christian ministry, as is seen by *verse 6* and the *first verse of chapter 4*. The apostle is showing its excellence, and in so doing contrasts it with the ministry of the old covenant. The word “testament” in *verse 6* means “covenant,” and the statement is that we are made ministers of the new covenant; “not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” Many people seem to have the idea that in this verse Paul is contrasting the two testaments or covenants. The old covenant they call the letter, and the new covenant the spirit. But one who reads the verse carefully cannot fail to see that this is an error. The old covenant is not referred to till we reach the seventh verse. Paul’s statement is simply to the effect that he and his associates were ministers of the spirit of the new covenant, and not of its letter, for the new covenant has its letter as well as the old. On this point Dr. Clarke makes the following pertinent comment:—*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.3*

Every institution has its letter as well as its spirit; as every word must refer to something of which it is the sign or signifier. The gospel has both its letter and its spirit, and multitudes of professing Christians, by resting in the letter, receive not the life which it is calculated to impart. Water, in baptism, is the letter that points out the purification of the soul; they who rest in this letter are without this purification; and dying in that state, they die eternally. Bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper are the letter; the atoning efficacy of the death of Jesus, and the grace communicated by this to the soul of the believer, are the spirit. Multitudes rest in this letter, simply receiving these symbols without reference to the atonement or to their guilt; and thus lose the benefit of the atonement and the salvation of their souls.... It may be safely asserted that the Jews in no period of their history ever rested more in the letter of their law than the vast majority of Christians are doing in the letter of their gospel. Unto multitudes of Christians Christ may truly say, Ye are not come unto me that ye may have life.*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.4*

In the above quotation it is shown that the letter of the new covenant kills; but the reason why it kills will be made more plain after we have made a brief comparison of the two covenants. These two covenants with their ministrations are brought to view in contrast in *verses 7 and 8*, which read thus:—*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.5*

“But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?”*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.6*

In this verse the old covenant is called the “ministration of death.” Why it was so called is very apparent to one who understands what the old covenant was. We will state it briefly. Before the Lord gave the ten commandments from Mount Sinai, he said to the Jews:—*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.7*

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will

obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel." *Exodus 19:4-6.SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.8*

On the third day after this, the Lord spoke the ten commandments in the hearing of all the people; "and he added no more; and he wrote them on two tables of stone." *Deuteronomy 5:22*. Then Moses went up to the Lord in the mount, and the Lord gave to him precepts growing out of the ten commandments. See *Exodus 21, 22, and 23*. The confirmation of the covenant, the preliminaries of which are given in *Exodus 19:5-8*, is related in *Exodus 24:3-8*. There we learn that—*SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.9*

"Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." *SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.10*

After this "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord;" and after he had built an altar and offered sacrifices unto the Lord, "he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Then "Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you *concerning all these words*." Thus was the covenant confirmed. We learn from this that the old covenant was simply an agreement between God and the children of Israel, *concerning the commandments of God*. The people on their part promised faithfully to keep the commandments, and the Lord promised to make of them a great nation. *SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.11*

In connection with this covenant there were "ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary." *Hebrews 9:1*. This sanctuary is described in *Exodus 25:26, 27, and 30*, and the principal "ordinances of divine service" are described in *Exodus 29:38-42*, and *Leviticus, chapters 4 and 16*. With these facts before us, we may understand why the ministration of the first covenant was called a "ministration of death." *SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.12*

(1) In this covenant the people had made an explicit agreement to keep the law of God. (2) By this law is the knowledge of sin (*Romans 3:20*), “for sin is the transgression of the law” (*1 John 3:4*). (3) The “ordinances of divine service” connected with the first covenant were for sin; but Paul tells us (*Hebrews 10:4*) that “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Those “ordinances of divine service” were only “a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things,” and therefore the sacrifices which the people offered had no power to make them perfect. Therefore (4) all who had to do with the old covenant alone were condemned to death; “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (*Romans 3:23*); “and the wages of sin is death” (*Romans 6:23*). There was in the old covenant no provision for the forgiveness of sins; therefore the ministration of that old covenant, which was performed by earthly priests, was, so far as their work extended, the ministration of death. Only the perfect can have life, and their ministration made nothing perfect. *SITI January 5, 1891, page 2.13*

It is true that during the time of the ministration of the old covenant, sins were forgiven (*Leviticus 4:26, 31, 35*), and this forgiveness was real, but it was obtained solely by virtue of faith in the promised sacrifice of Christ, and not because of anything in the old covenant. Paul says of Christ, in *Hebrews 9:15*, that he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, *for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament*, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” Thus we see that when sins committed under the first covenants were forgiven, they were forgiven by virtue of the second covenant. E. J. W. *SITI January 5, 1891, page 3.1*

(Concluded next week.)

January 12, 1891

“Exposition of 2 *Corinthians* 3:7-11. (Concluded.)” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

Some stumble over the first clause of 2 *Corinthians* 3:7. “The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones,” but the Scriptures furnish means for the complete exposition of this. Paul cannot mean that the *ministration* was written and engraven in stones, for that would be impossible, because the *ministration* was the service of the priests. Then it must be that he means that *death* was written and engraven in stones. But some will say, “This makes nonsense of the text.” Let us see. It is very easy to ascertain what was written and engraven in stone. *Exodus* 31:18 says that the Lord “gave to Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.” “And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand. The tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.” *Exodus* 32:15, 16. These two tables were broken, and after Moses had, by the command of the Lord, made two other tables, he said, “And he [the Lord] wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly.” *Deuteronomy* 10:4. These texts show that it was the ten commandments, and the ten commandments alone, that were written and engraven in stones; and therefore by the word “death,” in 2 *Corinthians* 3:7, Paul must refer to the ten commandments. *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.2*

But is it allowable to speak of the ten commandments as “death”? Are they death to anybody? It certainly is allowable, for they are death to all men, because all have sinned, and the wages of sin is death.” The law is the cause of death to every sinner that shall perish, and so by metonymy it is called death. In like manner the sons of the prophets said of the poisonous gourds, “There is death [i.e., a cause of death] in the pot.” 2 *Kings* 4:40; and the Lord said

that “the tree of the field is man’s life” (sustainer of life). *Deuteronomy 20:19*. So when Paul describes his conviction as a sinner, he says of the law, “And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.” *Romans 7:10*. *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.3*

Thus we find that in every sense of the word the ministration of the old covenant was “the ministration of death.” We have found, then (1) that the law, which was the basis of the covenant, was death to all, and (2) that the ministration concerning that violated law offered no relief, but in itself tended to death. *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.4*

Notwithstanding all this, there was a wonderful glory connected with the old covenant and its service. The giving of the law was attended with glory the like of which has never been seen on earth before or since, and will not be until the Lord shall come in the glory of his Father with all his angels. When Moses returned from the mount, his face was so glorified that the people could not look at it; and the glory of the Lord was present in the sanctuary to so great a degree that the priests were forced to obscure it with a cloud of incense, lest they should lie. *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.5*

Now let us briefly outline the new covenant. Paul says that this was established upon “better promises.” Its terms are found in *Hebrews 8:8-12*, which reads thus:—*SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.6*

“For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember

no more.” *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.7*

We find here the same condition as in the old covenant,—the people are to obey the law of God. But this covenant is established on “better promises” than the first, in that the Lord promises to forgive their sins, to write the law in their hearts, and to remember their iniquities no more. These things are all accomplished by virtue of Christ, who is the mediator of the new covenant. *Hebrews 8:9; 9:15*. “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (*1 John 1:7*), by securing the remission of past sins (*Romans 3:24, 25*), and enabling us to walk in harmony with the law (*Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:10; Hebrews 13:20, 21*). *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.8*

The law, then, is the basis of both covenants; hence it could not be done away with the old covenant, else there could be no new covenant. The terms of the new covenant leave no doubt on this point, and Christ’s connection with it brings the fact out still more clearly. Thus Christ is the minister of this new covenant (*Hebrews 8:1, 2*), and is now performing the ministration in the true sanctuary in heaven (*Hebrews 9:24*). His ministration has reference to the law, for he came to save sinners (*1 Timothy 1:15*), and he is offering his blood to save men from sin (*Romans 3:24; 1 John 1:7; Matthew 1:21*). This redemption we get through faith (*Romans 3:24*) and faith establishes the law (*Romans 3:31*). The law itself, having been violated, brings death; Christ redeems us from its curse (*Galatians 3:13*), and thus becomes our life (*Colossians 3:4*). *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.9*

Now note the contrast between the two covenants. The first had the ministration of death, because everything connected with it tended to death; the violated law was death to the sinner, and the earthly ministration freed no one from that condemnation. The second covenant has the ministration of the Spirit, because “the Lord is that Spirit” (*2 Corinthians 3:17*), and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty and life (*Galatians 6:8*). But although there is no death in the second covenant, there is in the rejection of it, for the law is still death to sinners, and all who are opposed to Christ are sinners, and condemned to death; so Paul says that the letter of the new covenant kills. The reason is that holding the mere letter of the new

covenant,—the performance of the gospel ordinances while not receiving Christ in the heart,—is really a rejection of Christ. Of the Lord's Supper, Paul says that he who does not discern the Lord's body, eats and drinks damnation to himself. *1 Corinthians 11:29*. He is in the same condition as though he had never heard of the new covenant. But in every case, whether of the sinner under the old covenant, or of one who rejects the new, it is the law that causes his death. *SITI January 12, 1891, page 3.10*

In the text under consideration, Paul contrasts the two ministrations as to glory. If the ministration which could not cleanse from sin was glorious, the ministration of the Spirit, which gives freedom from sin, must be more glorious. "If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." And so much more glorious is the ministration of the second covenant than that of the first that in comparison the first covenant seems to have had no glory. Why the ministration of the second covenant should be so much more glorious than that of the first, is because it is established upon "better promises," and Christ is its minister. *SITI January 12, 1891, page 11.1*

"For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." *2 Corinthians 3:11*. Now what was done away? The answer must be that it is that which was glorious. *Verse 9* states that it was the *ministration* of condemnation that was glorious. Then it must be the *ministration* of condemnation that was done away; that which remains is the ministration of the Spirit. By no possibility can *verse 11* be made to refer to the law, because it contrasts something done away with something that remains. And we have found that the law is the basis of both covenants, and therefore it cannot have been done away, but the ministration of the old covenant, as well as the covenant itself, was done away, as was indicated by the fading glory upon the countenance of Moses. But it needs no abstract reasoning to show that it is the tabernacle service, and that alone, to which the apostle refers in *verse 11* as being "done away," for he says. "If that which is done away was glorious," showing by the "if" that he had before called attention to something glorious; and the only thing which he has so designated in this connection, is the *ministration* of death. *Verse 7. SITI January 12, 1891, page 11.2*

We think that any reader who carefully follows this brief exposition will be able to see for himself, on reading *2 Corinthians 3:7-11*, that the apostle is simply contrasting the glory of the *service* of the two covenants, and that the law of God is not under consideration at all, except by an incidental allusion, which goes to show its permanent character. E. J. W. *SITI January 12, 1891, page 11.3*

January 19, 1891

“Candid but Humiliating Admissions” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 3.

E. J. Waggoner

Possibly it is not generally understood that the Sunday-law movement, and the movement to force the Bible into the public schools, are identical in spirit, and that the success of either one logically carries with it the whole National Reform scheme. This fact is so well shown, together with the utter selfishness that prompts the so-called religious reformation, in an article by J. H. Ecob, D.D., of Albany, in the New York *Independent* of December 11, that we reprint a large portion of the article. As will be seen from the article, the *Independent* itself does not favor the scheme. Here it is:—*SITI January 19, 1891, page 11.4*

Within a few weeks, the *Independent* has again spoken its mind on this subject, quoting with approbation certain Chicago preachers who asked that the Bible be forbidden in our public schools as a matter of justice to the tax-paying Jews and infidels. If I remember correctly, this is the only argument, it certainly is the chief argument, advanced by the aforesaid preachers and by the *Independent*. This position has an air of breadth and fairness which is captivating. It certainly does seem not quite “on the square” to take the money of Jews and infidels to support an institution, compel them to send their children to that institution, then to read to those children a book abhorrent to the parents. Not a few of our religious papers and teachers are demanding on this ground that the Bible be excluded from our public schools. *SITI January 19, 1891, page 11.5*

This is a demand that our public schools shall be entirely godless. We have no right to mention with reverence there the name of Christ, on account of the children of the tax-paying Jews. We have no right to pray, even silently, there, because the tax-paying infidel would not have his child’s mind perverted by deism. There must be no recognition of deity whatever in the public school, this great nursery of the nation’s citizens. On the same ground the moralities should be excluded, because tax-payers differ as to the basis of morals, and the extent of the moral code. On the same ground

Christian teachers should be excluded; for it is undoubtedly a grievous wrong to the Jew and the infidel to compel him to place his children under a teacher who can no more restrain his Christian influence, if he be a true child of God, than he can restrain his breathing. I suppose the State should seek teachers as the court seeks jurors. If possible, select men and women who have heard next to nothing about God and Christ, and have no yet made up their minds whether or not there be a God and a Saviour of men. *SITI January 19, 1891, page 11.6*

But we must consider the full scope of this argument. If our public schools must be godless in justice to unbelieving tax-payers, so must all other public institutions supported by the taxes of the people. Our entire system of chaplains in prisons and reformatories, in military schools, in the army and navy, in State Legislatures, and in the National Congress, involves the same injustice. What right have we to take the Catholic, the Jew, the infidel, to support our military schools, then compel his boy to come under the influence of a Christian Protestant chaplain, who not only reads the Bible to him, but prays before him and for him, and, if possible, with him: who; reaches to him in public and labors with him in private, striving by all means to make a Christian man of him? What right have we to tax the Catholic, the Jew, the infidel, to support the State Legislature, elect him to that body, then compel him every morning to submit to the praying of a Christian Protestant? I have spent the eighteen years of my ministry in two capital cities, and have never yet known either a Catholic, or Jew, or infidel to be invited to officiate as chaplain. What right have we to open our great presidential conventions with prayer, our world's fairs, in short, every great and serious undertaking? What right have our executive officers to issue Thanksgiving and fast-day proclamations? What right have they to take the oath of office? What right has our government to stamp upon our very dollars with which we pay our taxes, the words, "*In God we trust*"? What right have we to compel the infidel to handle such money, when we know it is supposed to burn his pockets, and harrow up his soul to be in possession of such poisonous stuff? He has a right to the clean, cold silver. *SITI January 19, 1891, page 11.7*

This argument in behalf of the unbelieving tax-payer would also

demand a revision of our Christian statute-books. What place is there for Sunday legislation? Consider what a burden we put upon the Jew. We practically compel him to observe two days in the week as rest-days. His religious scruples hold him to the seventh day, our Christian statutes hold him to the first. Even if some slight concessions are made for his conscience' sake, the result is practically the same, for no man can work when all the world is resting, neither can he rest much when all the world is at work, as every minister in the land, with his miserable, half-and-half Mondays, can testify. Such a burden has this become that the Jews are agitating the question of adopting the Christian Sunday.*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.1*

Then, too, what right have we to tax the infidel to sustain our vast and complicated police machinery throughout the State, and then on Sunday convert the whole system to our Christian use, to obtain a quiet, orderly day in which the Christians may read a book and worship a God in whom the infidel tax-payer does not believe? He and his infidel brethren tax-payers*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.2*

"Cannot work and cannot play
On this, the Christian's holy day."*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.3*

Our Christian churches and institutions are exempt from taxation, the Jew and infidel are compelled to shoulder their proportion of this burden. In fact, this little proposition to render the public school godless for the sake of the unbelieving Jew and infidel, is like the genius escaping from the bottle-it rises and rises till it fills the heavens like a cloud. It is a proposition to render the entire State and national government godless to accommodate that same Jew and infidel.*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.4*

It would seem that a few articles like that ought to be sufficient, if well circulated, to show how little of the gospel and how much of the spirit of despotism there is in the demand for the Bible in the schools. The claim that the exclusion of the Bible from the public schools will make them entirely godless has been exploded many times, and need not be noticed here. But we hope that every reader will give careful and candid consideration to the questions which Mr. Ecob asks.*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.5*

“What right have we to tax the Catholic, the Jew, the infidel, to support our military schools, then compel his boy to come under the influence of a Christian Protestant chaplain, who not only reads the Bible to him, but prays before him, and for him, and, if possible, with him?” What right, to be sure? We don’t believe that the military chaplain does or attempts to do very much praying with the young men, for he is there as a military officer, whose dignity would be compromised by associating on equal terms with a common soldier; but is there any just reason why the State should assume this role of the tithing-man, to *compel* people to go to church? If the churches wish to do missionary labor in the State institutions, let them do so at their own expense, and let the people be as free to attend or to stay away as they would be if not Government employés.*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.6*

Mr. Ecob says that if the Bible is to be excluded from the schools on the ground that men must not be taxed to support a religion in which they do not believe, then we should not tax them to support chaplains in our Legislatures. A very just conclusion. That farce should be ended, not simply in the interest of justice, but for the honor of religion.*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.7*

“What right,” he asks, “has our government to stamp upon our very dollars with which we pay our taxes the words, “*In God we trust*”? We confess that we cannot answer the question. We are sure that the government does not trust in God, and that the falsehood which it stamps upon its coins is a taking in vain of the name of God. Still, as everybody knows that it means nothing, and few ever stop to read it, but receive and pay out their money without considering what is on it, there is not so much in it that tends to degrade religion to a mere form as there is in the enforced mechanical reading of the Scriptures.*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.8*

Mr. Ecob has a wonderfully clear perception of the unity and fitness of things. He sees that if it is not just to enforce one religious act, then it is not right to enforce another. If men should not be compelled to pay taxes to support some other people’s form of worship, then they should not be compelled to support men to enforce Sunday laws.*SITI January 19, 1891, page 19.9*

But the admission in the last paragraph but one shows conclusively that Sunday laws are, and are considered by their upholders to be, the bond of union between Church and State. "Then, too, what right have we to tax the infidel to sustain our vast and complicated police machinery throughout the State, and then on Sunday convert the whole system to our Christian use, to obtain a quiet, orderly day?" This is well worth considering, not merely by the infidel, but by the true Christian. Is the disciple above his Lord? Shall Christ's followers do in his service that which he condemned? Is it not misdirected and unholy ambition, which would seek to advance religion by means that the Master would not use? Do men in this century know how the cause of Christ should be carried on, better than Christ himself did? Do those who love the Lord Jesus as the head of the body, the church, and who believe that the true body of Christ will have within it all the power of its divine Head, wish to acknowledge the absence of that power by turning the State into a "Christian" machine to supply that lack? Is the work that was begun by Christ and his apostles to be perfected by ungodly policemen? Should not a people seek unto their God? Would that all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, by whatever name they are called, might see in these admissions the insult that is offered to Christ in his own house, and the necessity for a true reformation. E. J. W.*SITI*
January 19, 1891, page 19.10

January 26, 1891

“Peace with God” The Signs of the Times, 17, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” *Romans 5:1. SITI January 26, 1891, page 19.11*

The preceding chapters set before us man’s lost condition, in rebellion against God, the standard of righteousness, and the only way by which it can be obtained. The necessity and the fact of justification by faith are very clearly set forth in chapter three, and in chapter four Abraham is cited as an example. Those who have light upon God’s law, as did the Jews, are in danger of trusting to their own works for salvation; therefore the apostle shows that Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, was not righteous by his own works, but by faith. This is the only way that men can become righteous. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 19.12*

“Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” To be justified is to be accounted righteous. Peace is the inevitable result of such a condition. Sin is rebellion; it is warfare against God. When a rebel lays down his arms, peace must result. Peace is the absence of war. The warfare has been all on our side, God does not fight against man, but man is fighting against God. “Not that we loved God, but that he loved us.” In such a case it is clear that when we cease to fight against God, when we surrender, peace must be the result. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 19.13*

The trouble with too many is that they look for peace without surrendering. They expect God to give them peace while they are still in arms against him. This would be an impossibility. If he were fighting against us, then he could give us peace, by ceasing to fight us. But since the fighting is all on our part, the matter of peace rests with us. God has opened the way for us to surrender; our part is to lay hold of the peace which he offers us. Peace is ours whenever we will cease our rebellion. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 19.14*

This peace which comes to the justified soul is no common peace. Says the Saviour: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." *John 14:27*. And the apostle Paul declares that the peace of God "passeth all understanding." *Philippians 4:7*. It has power, too, for he declares that it will keep us, and he exhorts us to let the peace of God rule in our hearts. *Colossians 3:15*. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 19.15*

Since man's rebellion against God consists in violating his law (*Isaiah 30:9*) it is evident that peace is found only in obedience. "Great peace have they which love thy law," says the psalmist, "and nothing shall offend them," or cause them to stumble. *Psalms 119:165*. The Lord says, "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." *Isaiah 48:18*. "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked." *Verse 22*. It is dangerous for a person to seek for peace while living in the commission of known sin; for Satan may give him a fictitious peace, a satisfied feeling that passes for peace. What the sinner should seek for is forgiveness and reconciliation with God; he should make a complete surrender, because his rebellion is displeasing to God, and then he will have true peace. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 19.16*

Peace is rest. It is the same that the Saviour offers, when he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." *Matthew 11:28*. A restless spirit, unholy ambition, and unsatisfied longings, are not compatible with the peace that God bestows. The peace of God keeps the mind and heart. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." *Isaiah 26:3*. The mind that is fixed on Christ is not wavering, not easily distracted, even though cares and troubles press. It is not diverted by frivolity. "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." *Proverbs 16:3*. How many students complain of inability to concentrate their minds on one subject. If they would but commit their ways to the Lord, they would find that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." *1 Timothy 4:8*. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 19.17*

A man cannot have peace with God, and be at enmity with his

neighbor. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" *1 John 4:20*. The peace of God is the result of obedience to his commandments, and one of the great commandments is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Love is the fulfilling of the law; and love "suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." *1 Corinthians 13:4, 5*. A disposition to find fault, to criticise harshly, to envy, to complain, to speak bitter, cutting words, is a sure evidence that one has not the peace of God ruling in his heart; and if he has not the peace of God in his heart, then he is a sinner, and condemned. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 26.1*

Christ is our peace. *Ephesians 2:14*. He has made peace through the blood of his cross. *Colossians 1:20*. He is our peace because in him we are made the righteousness of God. Christ and the Father work together for peace among men. The angels announced at the birth of Christ, "On earth peace, good-will toward men." *Luke 2:14*. And since Christ himself is peace, it follows that all who are Christ's will be at peace. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." *James 3:17*. Purity, righteousness, comes alone through faith in Christ, and peace naturally follows, as stated in our text. All who are really Christ's will heed the inspired injunction:—*SITI January 26, 1891, page 26.2*

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." *Ephesians 4:31, 32*. E. J. W. *SITI January 26, 1891, page 26.3*

February 2, 1891

“Baptism—It’s Significance” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 5.

E. J. Waggoner

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” *Matthew 28:19.SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.4*

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” *Mark 16:15, 16.SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.5*

In these two texts we have the importance of baptism sufficiently set forth. Let us learn from the Scriptures what it signifies, and in so doing we shall show its nature and the necessity for it. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.6*

That baptism does not consist merely in an outward form is indicated in *1 Corinthians 12:13*: “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” It is true here as elsewhere that “the body is of Christ;” and that this is the body into which we are baptized, is positively stated in *Galatians 3:27*, where we read, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Thus we are taught that baptism is that by which we become Christ’s, and heirs according to the promise. It is that by which we get into Christ, who is the Door of salvation. Being baptized into his body is being joined to his church, for the church is the body of Christ. See *Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18*. And since it is by his Spirit that this union is effected, it is evident that baptism is something more than a mere form, and that only those are members of the true church of Christ who have the Spirit of Christ. See *Romans 8:9*. This must not by any means be understood as depreciating literal baptism or union with the visible church. We only wish to emphasize the fact that the simple *form* is not all. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.7*

Since it is by baptism that we become united to Christ,—“put on Christ,”—a very important question is, At what point do we come into contact with Christ? That is, At what stage in the ministry of Christ do we become united to him? The answer to this gives the key to the entire subject of baptism. This question is answered in *Romans 6:3, 4*, as follows:—*SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.8*

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.9*

The death of Christ, then, is that by which we become united to him. Baptism signifies the death and resurrection of Christ. But it signifies more than a simple recognition of that fact. It signifies our acceptance of that sacrifice, and that we actually share his death and resurrection. If we ever are glorified with Christ, we must suffer with him. *Romans 8:17*. We must share the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death, and must also know the power of his resurrection. *Philippians 3:10*. Let us trace the course of this great transaction.*SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.10*

“All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” *Romans 3:23*. Because all have sinned, judgment has come upon all men to condemnation. This condemnation is to death, for the wages of sin is death. See *Romans 5:12, 18; 6:23*. Every man that does not believe in Christ is condemned already. *John 3:18*. Sentence of death has already gone forth upon us, and our life is forfeited. In yielding to Satan, we have sold ourselves to him, and have received nothing in exchange. The Scripture says, “Ye have sold yourselves for naught.” *Isaiah 52:3*. Therefore we really have no life. This life that men live does not belong to them; they have given it, with themselves, into the power of Satan. And because sinners are condemned to death,—have forfeited their life,—the Scripture says that “he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.” *John 3:36*. He never has any life of his own.*SITI February 2, 1891, page 26.11*

But the same scripture that says, “Ye have sold yourselves for

naught,” says also, “Ye shall be redeemed without money.” Christ is the Redeemer. And because “the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.” *Hebrews 2:14, 15*. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to give life to those who had forfeited their life to Satan. He, the stronger than the strong, came and entered into the prison-house of Satan, that he might redeem his captives. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.1*

“Ye shall be redeemed without money.” “Knowing that ye were redeemed not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.” *1 Peter 1:18, 19*, Revised Version. Money could not purchase a single life. Life must be given for life; and the only life that could redeem a forfeited life is the life of Christ. He could buy us back only by giving his life for ours. That means that he gave his life to us, if we accept him. He has life in himself. He could lay down his life and take it again. When he lay in the grave, “it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” *Acts 2:24*. Herein he differed from man. If man should give up his life in payment of the forfeit, he would have nothing left. But Christ, whose life is of greater worth than that of all created beings, can give up his life and still have as much life left. Having paid the forfeit, he can give life to us in place of ours. If we accept his life, we are sure of life, no matter what becomes of this life. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.2*

But in order to get his life, which is proof against the power of Satan, we must acknowledge that our life is lost, and that there is no righteousness in us, with which to give anything toward its redemption. Knowing that this life is not ours anyway, we must be willing to surrender it into the hands of Christ, in order that we may receive his life in exchange. This is most reasonable. It is a question of whether we will give our life to Satan, and get nothing in exchange, or to Christ, and get his life instead. It would seem as though everybody ought to decide without a moment’s hesitation; yet it is a struggle for everyone to give up this forfeited life for

Christ's. It is not pleasant to die, and they would fain put it off as long as possible, or even persuade themselves that they will not have to give up life at all. The reason for this is that giving up this life means giving up all that pertains to it. All that is of self must go with the life. Says the apostle Paul: "They that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." *Galatians 5:24*, Revised Version. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.3*

But at last the surrender is made. We give ourselves to the Lord, and take him instead. How do we get him? We cannot tell anything about the process; we only know that it is by faith. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." *Galatians 3:26*. Christ dwells in the heart by faith. See *Ephesians 3:17*. All that there is to do on our part is to give up, to yield ourselves fully to the Lord, desiring that his ways shall take the place of our ways, and believing that he will give himself to us, according to his promise. Then we are buried with him by baptism into his death, thus signifying the putting off of the old life, the crucifying of the old man, and the taking of Christ's life, in whom we rise to walk in newness of life. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.4*

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." *Colossians 3:1-3*. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.5*

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." *1 Corinthians 15:10*. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.6*

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." *Romans 6:6*. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.7*

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." *Ephesians 4:22-24*. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.8*

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God.” *2 Corinthians 5:17, 18.* *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.9*

Do not these scriptures state as plainly as can be that in becoming Christ's we take his life in exchange for ours? It is not simply that Christ gave his life to purchase us, but that he gives his life *to us*; our life has been forfeited, and we are virtually dead,—dead in trespasses and sins, and he gives his life to us that we may actually have life. Henceforth, then, it is to be the life of Christ that meets the temptations of Satan, and labors to do the Father's will. But Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; therefore the life which is given to us will present the same characteristics that the life of Christ presented when he was on the earth in person; his life in us must be as strong to do and to resist as it was when he lived in Judea. *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.10*

How can we live this life?—Just as we received it—by faith. Read carefully and remember the following texts:—*SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.11*

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” *Colossians 3:1.* *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.12*

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Romans 6:8-11.* *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.13*

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” *Galatians 2:20.* *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.14*

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power;

in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” *Colossians 2:9-12.SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.15*

This is the order of the new life: Having accepted Christ’s life, we remember that the future life is to be his, not ours. Then the same spirit of self-renunciation that led us to accept Christ must be ever present with us to lead us to hold him. We must pray not only for a clean heart to be created in us, but also for a steadfast spirit to be renewed within us. And how do we hold him?—Just the same as we accepted him and were raised with him; through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. That is, with an intense longing that his life shall be manifest in ours, we lay hold of it through our faith in the power that raised Christ from the dead. We know that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead can quicken us, for that is why Christ was raised from the dead. He “was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” *SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.16*

This is that which Paul means when he expresses the desire, “that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.” *Philippians 3:10.* It is what he wishes for us when he prays, “that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.” *Ephesians 1:18-20.SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.17*

There can be no greater exhibition of power than that which is required to raise the dead. It is creative power. And this is the power which is given to us in Christ, the acceptance of which we acknowledge when we are buried with him by baptism into his death, and are raised in him. How true it is that “his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.” *2 Peter 1:3.* And it is the manifestation of the power of Christ’s life in our lives that gives us a sure hope of eternal life with him. For says the apostle:—*SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.18*

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 *Peter 1:3-5.SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.19*

We have not devoted any space to the discussion of “the mode of baptism.” We see no need for any such discussion. Baptism is a burial. It is an expressive symbol of the complete hiding of self in Christ. There is certainly no need of discussing the “mode” of baptism with one who is not a fit subject for the ordinance; what he wants is to be shown his need of Christ; and when one has come to the point where he is wholly submissive to the will of Christ, when he fully surrenders to him, then there is no necessity for any such discussion. He will gladly accept Christ in the divinely-appointed way. May God grant that all who read may know, not simply the fact, but the power of Christ’s resurrection.*SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.20*

“Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” E. J. W.*SITI February 2, 1891, page 34.21*

February 9, 1891

“The ‘Independent’ and the Sabbath” The Signs of the Times, 17, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

The New York *Independent* of January 8 contains several pages of letters from prominent men, in response to its request for their views as to whether the Columbian Exposition should be open on Sunday. It has also several columns of editorial comment on the same subject. From all this matter we extract a few suggestive items. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 34.22*

Of the one hundred and nineteen Senators and Representatives whose letters are published, only twenty-four are unqualifiedly in favor of Sunday opening; nineteen think that the gates may be open under certain restrictions; two think that the exposition should be open for religious exercises on a grand scale—a sort of religious show; and six are either undecided or do not care to express an opinion. This shows that the great majority oppose Sunday opening. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 34.23*

Very few of the one hundred and nineteen public men gave any reason for their opinion in favor of Sunday closing. The principal reason given is that opening the exhibition would diminish the respect of the people for Sunday. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 34.24*

The Hon. C. H. Grosvenor, of Ohio, gives a reason which clashes strangely with the *Independent's* general heading to the collection of replies. The heading is printed in large black letters: “Shall We Obey God’s Commandment?” Mr. Grosvenor’s reply is:—*SITI February 9, 1891, page 34.25*

I do not think that the Columbian Exposition should be opened for public exhibition on Sunday. The Sabbath is as much an American institution as is the recognition that religion, morality, and intelligence are essential to the welfare of the State. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 34.26*

Can anyone tell what connection there is between obeying God’s

commandment and recognizing an American institution? Is he the God of the Americans only? Is he not also of the English, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the French, and the Italians? If Sunday observance is enjoined by one of God's commandments, by what right is the day claimed as "an American institution"? And if it is an American institution, then it is certain that it is not of God. Indeed, this is certain anyway. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 34.27*

On the editorial page the *Independent* prints over a column of Scripture relating to the Sabbath. Each text is printed in a separate paragraph, and in Italic type, to make it specially prominent. The first is the fourth commandment, and the others are strong expressions concerning the Sabbath, as *Isaiah 58:13, 14*. Of course not one of them has the slightest reference to the first day of the week. Following these texts, the *Independent* has this just comment:—*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.1*

What God commands is highest law. "Thus saith the Lord" is conclusive, both as to the authority of the law and our obligation to obey it. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.2*

Speaking through Moses and the prophets, God says, "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy" [not spoken through Moses but by Jehovah's own voice], and pronounces penalty for disobedience against those who violate it. The command is repeated and emphasized in different places and in different forms. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.3*

When or by whom has this command been repealed? Not by Christ, as is sometimes erroneously inferred. He did break the intricate network of regulation which the Jews had woven about it, and which had made it a burden and not a relief. He taught that it was right to heal, to relieve distress, to care for life, to do works of necessity on the Sabbath, but he did not abolish it. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.4*

Yet in the face all this, the *Independent* pleads for Sunday observance *in obedience to God's commandment!* We cannot understand such inconsistency. It truly says that Christ did not abolish the Sabbath; now what is that Sabbath? Notice: God commanded the observance of "the Sabbath-day," literally, "the day

of the Sabbath.” That Sabbath-day is declared to be “*the seventh day.*” *Exodus 20:8-10*. We are told that it was “the seventh day” that God rested upon, blessed, and sanctified at the close of creation. It was a definite *day* that the Lord, through Jeremiah, warned the Jews not to violate. It was for disregarding the seventh-day Sabbath that they were carried into captivity. It was the seventh-day Sabbath that Christ was falsely accused of breaking; and it was of the seventh day that he spoke when he declared himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath-day. *Mark 2:28*. And he didn’t abolish it. Therefore it is the Sabbath, the Lord’s day still; and opening the Columbian Exposition on Sunday will be no more a violation of God’s commandment than will opening it on Monday or Friday.*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.5*

The *Independent* says that if Christ did abolish the Sabbath, “his own disciples did not so understand him; for they continued to observe the institution, transferring it, after the resurrection, to the first day of the week, though both days were observed for a time by some of them.” This suggests a train of queries, a few of which must be noted.*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.6*

1. If Christ’s disciples transferred the Sabbath from the seventh day of the first (as impossible a thing as it would be to transfer the third day of the week to the fourth), and if they had authority so to do, why did they not do it all at once?*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.7*

2. Which class was right-the one that observed the first day, or the one that continued to observe the seventh?*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.8*

3. If the action of men, professed disciples, is to settle the matter of Sabbath observance, then was it not, for a time at least, as correct to observe the seventh day as the first day?*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.9*

4. If the disciples had a right to change the day, and the change was made so gradually that for a time both days were observed, when did Sunday keeping get the *full* sanction of the fourth commandment?*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.10*

5. Was there a time in the evolution of the Sunday sabbath when it

was just half right to keep Sunday and half right to keep Sabbath?*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.11*

6. If it is right now to keep any day that people may choose, in obedience to the fourth commandment, without any instruction from the Lord, was it not equally right in the days of Nehemiah and Jeremiah? and where then was the justice in the punishment of the Jews for not resting on the seventh day?*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.12*

7. If it was right to keep the Sabbath at all after the resurrection, is it not equally right now?*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.13*

Other questions might be asked, but we wish to note just one other point. The *Independent* says:—*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.14*

When the Almighty established the Sabbath, he established it on a principle as lasting as the race—the physical need of rest, as verified in all history and among all peoples; that need is just as real now as when the commandment was given.*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.15*

To this we reply flatly that the Almighty never established the Sabbath on any such principle, and that there is not an iota of proof in the Scriptures that he did. Our contradiction is based on the following plain declarations of the Lord himself:—*SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.16*

“Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” *Exodus 20:9-11. SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.17*

“Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.” *Exodus 31:13. SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.18*

“Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” *Ezekiel 20:12.SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.19*

This is the reason, and the only reason, for the Sabbath. It is established upon the principle of God’s creative power-that power which makes him alone worthy of all worship, and by which he sanctifies those who yield themselves to him. It was given that men might remember him as the Creator and Sanctifier, and we are sure that this need is as real now as when the commandment was given. It is “the foundation of many generations,” and “if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” *SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.20*

So far as the Columbian Exposition is concerned, it makes no difference to us whether it is opened on Sunday or not; but we do hope that the false arguments and the perversion of Scripture that is resorted to support Sunday closing may serve to show many people where the truth is in regard to the Sabbath. E. J. W. *SITI February 9, 1891, page 42.21*

February 16, 1891

“Patience, Its Development and Its Fruit” The Signs of the Times, 17, 7.

E. J. Waggoner

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” *Romans 5:1-5. SITI February 16, 1891, page 42.22*

Here we have set forth the practical side of justification by faith. Not that justification by faith is not practical in every aspect, for nothing can be more practical than the forgiveness of sins. But this sets forth the practical every-day results of justification by faith. First there is peace that cannot be ruffled by any outside disturbance. It was such peace that, in Stephen and Paul, was superior to the howling mob that demanded their lives. Next there is joy, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. Faith gives access to the grace of God. The grace of God is according to the riches of his glory. The glory of God will be according to the riches of his grace. The possession of grace makes sure the glory to be revealed; therefore whoever through faith tastes the riches of God’s grace, may rejoice in full assurance of glory to be revealed in him. The faith that appropriates the grace of God reaches forward and grasps the eternal glory. As the apostle Peter says:—*SITI February 16, 1891, page 42.23*

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” *1 Peter 1:7-9. SITI February 16, 1891, page 42.24*

But our rejoicing in hope of the glory of God is not because we have

so easy a time, with no trials. Notice in the text just quoted that the “joy unspeakable and full of glory” is coupled with such trials as can be likened only to the fierce flame that heats the crucible in which the gold is placed. So in the passage before us. “We glory in tribulations also.” Why?—Because “tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope.” Let us note these points. We know something of what tribulation means; shall we study how it works patience, what the experience is which results, and what the hope? *SITI February 16, 1891, page 42.25*

Most people think that tribulation works impatience. That is a great mistake. It is true that even petty trials that are not worthy to be listed in the same catalogue with tribulations are often followed by impatience; but they never beget impatience. They simply reveal the impatience that already exists. Many people think to excuse their irritability by pleading strong provocation. If other people were not so exasperating, they would not become impatient. Wrong. If other people did not cross them, they doubtless would not manifest impatience. A dog or a bear may say the same; they will not show their teeth, and growl, unless provoked. But their nature is none the less fierce. Circumstances and associations do not make us impatient and wicked. They may tend to draw it out; but they cannot make us manifest that which we do not have. *SITI February 16, 1891, page 42.26*

Tribulation works patience only in those who, being justified by faith, have peace with God. Nothing but tribulation can work patience there is no other way that patience can be developed, except by trials; the fiercer the trials, the more the patience, the greater the experience, and the brighter the hope. *SITI February 16, 1891, page 42.27*

What is patience? It is simply endurance. The ox is a symbol of patience, because it quietly bears the yoke, and endures heavy loads and even blows. Now how can a man bear and suffer, and show a disposition of quiet perseverance, unless he has trials. There is no call for patience when there is no burden to bear. As the muscle that is never exerted in carrying burdens can never develop strength, so the soul that never has trials can never develop patience. Patience is necessary, for only he in whom patience has

its perfect work, is perfect and entire, lacking nothing. *James 1:4*. Therefore tribulations are necessary. Surely we may rejoice in that which works perfection, and brings to us every possible good. *SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.1*

How does tribulation work patience? The fact that it does so only in those who are justified by faith in Christ, suggests the answer. It is only when the relation between us and Christ is very close. Let us put it in the form of a paradox, that it may be the more strongly impressed on the mind. Tribulation works endurance only when we learn how not to endure it. We endure the burden which tribulation imposes upon us only by throwing it off. Let the following texts serve as proof:—*SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.2*

“Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on.... For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” *Matthew 6:25-32, Revised Version. SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.3*

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” *1 Peter 5:6, 7. SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.4*

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” *Psalms 55:22. SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.5*

The apostle Paul was called upon to bear heavy burdens, and to endure great suffering, and he says this of the amount of his burdens, and how he bore them:—*SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.6*

“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” *1 Corinthians 15:10. SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.7*

He who has been justified by faith has laid upon Christ the greatest burden that can be borne—the burden of sin. Christ died for the purpose of assuming this burden, which men could not bear. “Who

his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” *1 Peter 2:24*. Now the justified person finds trials pressing upon him; but he has already learned of Christ’s power, and has proved the truth of his gracious promise, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” *Matthew 11:28*. He knows that he himself has not the strength to endure these trials without being irritated; the load will prove too galling for him. So he bears it by casting it upon Christ, which he has the fullest warrant to do. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” *Romans 8:32*. *SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.8*

Thus not the mere doctrine, but the actual fact of justification by faith, becomes the soother of all pains, the supporter in every trial, the strength in every duty. We do not know how we are going to be fed and clothed, if we follow some clearly indicated line of duty. What of that? “Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?” The greater includes the less, and if God has given his Son, that carries every needful thing with it. What shall we say of the faith of one who professes to know Christ, and yet is continually worrying and fretting for fear of some calamity, or murmuring at little ills that befall him? Surely if his faith does not enable him to trust under these smaller trials, how can he know anything about God? If faith in Christ is good for anything, it is good for everything. And that is just what it is good for. “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” *1 Timothy 4:8*. *SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.9*

And patience works experience. Of course. Experience in what?—Why, experience, or proving of the power of God to keep us even in the little vexations and trials of life, as well as in the tribulation that comes in time of great persecution. Only trials can give us this experience, for only trials and afflictions drive us to test the power of God. And remember that this “experience” is simply experience in the willingness of God to bear all our burdens, so that the peace of God, and not impatience, may rule in our hearts. And yet men and women who never in their lives cast a single burden on the Lord, who never took the every-day trials of life to the Lord for him to bear for them, and who consequently were developing impatience and fretfulness, often talk about their “Christian experience.” Such

should learn that experience is something more than a mere profession.*SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.10*

The limits of this article forbid a consideration of the hope that maketh not ashamed, which this practical experience begets. Another article must be devoted to that. But if the reader will only make the experiment of laying hold by faith upon the power and love of God, he will know by experience what the hope is. E. J. W.*SITI February 16, 1891, page 50.11*

February 23, 1891

“How to Forget” The Signs of the Times, 17, 8.

E. J. Waggoner

In the epistle to the Philippians the apostle Paul said: “This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” *Philippians 3:13, 14. SITI February 23, 1891, page 50.12*

So much is said in the Bible about remembering that many are in danger of losing sight of the fact that it is a duty sometimes to forget. It is a great thing to learn how to remember, but it is an equally great thing to learn the art of forgetfulness. One reason why so many fail to make advancement in the Christian life is because they have never learned how to forget. They think that one can forget only as the thing gradually fades from the mind, not realizing that they have to put forth positive effort in order to forget, as well as to remember. *SITI February 23, 1891, page 50.13*

It will scarcely be questioned by anyone that scenes and acts of wickedness are to be forgotten. When the sin has been confessed and forgiven, then the mind should turn from it. True, the individual should never forget that he has been taken from a horrible pit, nor that he stands only by faith, having no strength in himself; but if he allows his mind to dwell upon the specific acts of sin, one of two things, and possibly both, will result,—either he will be led to doubt that he has been forgiven, or else he will be impelled, by the force of habit and association, to the commission of the same things again. An impure thought cannot find lodgment in the mind without leaving a stain. We have known many persons to cheat themselves out of a great blessing that God had for them, simply by keeping their minds fixed on the sin, and letting that eclipse the love of God. It is a great thing to forget, even while retaining sufficient remembrance to appreciate at its true value the wonderful love of God in pardoning sin. *SITI February 23, 1891, page 50.14*

Another things that it is most necessary to forget is that which may

have been said against us. If uncharitable remarks have been made, to remember them is like taking to one's self a deadly poison. Nothing is more deadening to spiritual life; for the fact that such things are not forgotten proves that they are not forgiven, and if they are not forgiven that is an evidence that the soul is not rejoicing in the love of God. When God forgives us, he puts upon us his own righteousness in place of the sin, and then treats us as though we had never sinned; and if we obey the injunction to forgive one another even as God hath for Christ's sake forgiven us, we shall treat the one who has offended as though he had always done us kindness instead of injury. Without this, the peace of God cannot rule in the heart. *SITI February 23, 1891, page 50.15*

Another cause of stumbling is the failure to forget the good deeds that have been done. This is scarcely less fatal than to remember the specific acts of sin. Sometimes, through the grace of God, we are enabled to accomplish a really good work, which gives us great joy. But then, instead of thanking God that he has done something with us, we insensibly take to ourselves some of the glory, and congratulate ourselves over our success. Instead of going on in the same strength to gain other victories, we sit down and look at what has been done, or else, going on, we keep looking back, and so stumble and fall. Nobody can expect to make any headway in a race if he keeps looking back over his shoulder. If he does so, he cannot fail to stumble over some object lying in his path, or else his course will be very crooked. He who is running the Christian race should heed these words of the wise man:—*SITI February 23, 1891, page 50.16*

“Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and all thy ways shall be ordered aright. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil.” *Proverbs 4:25-27, margin. SITI February 23, 1891, page 50.17*

But how shall we forget? Many would forget, but they do not know how. They take hold of the thing and resolutely attempt to force it out of their mind, but that only fixes it the more firmly. Well, the secret of forgetting is very simple. Forget one thing by thinking of something else. It is impossible for the mind to contemplate two

things at the same time. Now, if you wish to forget something bad, think of something good. Forget the things that are behind by looking toward the things that are before. If you have been able to do a good work, thank God for his help, and in the strength of that help go on to do another good work, giving your whole mind to it. There is a prize before us, even the prize of “the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” This high calling is holiness of life, godliness; it is above us, and we cannot climb toward it by looking down at the path we have already trod.*SITI February 23, 1891, page 58.1*

“No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Of course not, and he never can be until he looks straight forward instead of back. If a man at the plow should keep looking back, his plow would keep continually running out, and he could not plow at all. He would make no more headway than a man would who should try to run a race and at the same time look over his shoulder. Therefore, as he who has called us is holy, let us resolutely press toward the mark, “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” E. J. W.*SITI February 23, 1891, page 58.2*

March 2, 1891

“The Spirit as Guide” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 9.

E. J. Waggoner

When Christ told his disciples that he was about to go away, and that they could not follow him, their hearts were filled with sorrow and anxiety. They dreaded to face an unfriendly world alone. He had been their guide and instructor, and they had learned much from his teachings. They knew of no one who could fill his place. Peter had echoed the sentiments of all the disciples when, in answer to Christ's inquiry if they also would go away, he said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” They knew that no one else could do for them what Jesus had done; and the thought of being separated from him was a sad one. *SITI March 2, 1891, page 58.3*

To comfort them, Christ gave them the assurance that he would come again and receive them unto himself, and that by this means they could again be with him. But even this promise was not sufficient, for there would still intervene a long period during which they would be left alone. How could they do without the presence and counsel of their Lord? *SITI March 2, 1891, page 58.4*

Again Jesus meets the difficulty by promising that whatsoever they should ask in his name should be done for them; and he added, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth.” *John 14:16, 17*. This Spirit was to be sent in his name, and was to take his place until his return. Said Christ, “I will not leave you comfortless [orphans]; I will come to you.” This coming does not refer to his personal, visible coming, when he will receive his people to himself, but to the Spirit who should come in his name. The Spirit was to be their guide, to prepare them for his coming at the last day. *SITI March 2, 1891, page 58.5*

The offices of the Spirit are many; but there is a special one pointed out in this discourse of our Lord. Said he: “These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter,

which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” *John 14:25, 26*. It is as a teacher that the Spirit is here brought to view. *SITI March 2, 1891, page 58.6*

Many persons entertain very erroneous views as to the manner in which the Spirit operates. They imagine that it will teach them something which the Bible does not contain. When certain Bible truths are presented to them for their observance, they excuse themselves from all responsibility in the matter by saying that they are led by the Spirit of God, and do not feel it their duty to do that particular thing. They say the Spirit was given to guide into all truth; and, consequently, if it was necessary to obey that portion of the Scripture, it would have been brought to their notice. The fact that they do not feel impressed to obey is proof to their minds that there is no necessity for obedience. To such persons the Bible is of no account; they make its truth depend entirely upon their own feelings. And they actually charge God with the inconsistency of authorizing his Spirit to speak in contradiction of his revealed word. The fact that God cannot lie should convince anyone that his Spirit and his word must always be in harmony. *SITI March 2, 1891, page 58.7*

Christ prayed for his disciples, “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” The psalmist David said, “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.” From these passages we learn that when Christ said, “When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth,” he meant that the Spirit would lead them into a proper understanding of that which had already been revealed. He plainly stated this when he said, “He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Many things that Christ said were not understood at the time; but they were made plain by the Spirit, after Christ had ascended to heaven. And it is thus that the Spirit teaches us now; it leads those who are humble and teachable into a proper understanding of the written word of God. *SITI March 2, 1891, page 58.8*

Paul gives testimony on this point which is not uncertain. In *Ephesians 6:13-17*, he describes the Christian’s armor. The

following is the concluding portion: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, *which is the word of God.*" Christ said that when the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, should come, he would "reprove [convince] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Paul says that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Both these passages are harmonized by the one quoted from Paul to the Ephesians. The Spirit does indeed convince of sin, but it is by impressing on the minds and hearts of men the claims of God's word. The Bible is the sword, the instrument by which the Spirit pierces the heart and lays bare its wickedness. The Spirit is the active agent, but the word of God is that through which it works. In Isaiah we are told by what we are to try them: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." *Isaiah 8:20*. It is the spirit of darkness that leads men to act contrary to the word of God. E. J. W. *SITI March 2, 1891, page 66.1*

March 9, 1891

“Under the Law” The Signs of the Times, 17, 10.

E. J. Waggoner

“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” *Galatians 5:18*. Antinomians very rarely quote this verse, doubtless because it is so very evident from the connection that the law is recognized as being in active existence. Let us give it our attention for a little while, that we may see what beautiful harmony there is in the Bible on the subject of the law. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 66.2*

Since those who are led by the Spirit are *not* under the law, it follows that those who *are not* led by the Spirit *are* under the law. Again, the preceding verses read as follows: “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other.” *Galatians 5:16, 17*. These verses state in the plainest terms that the flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other; but walking in the flesh and walking in the Spirit are directly opposite conditions. Then since those who are led by the Spirit are *not* under the law, and those who are not led by the Spirit *are* under the law, it follows that those who are under the law are those who are fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 66.3*

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” *Galatians 5:19-21*. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 66.4*

The fruit of the Spirit is, of course, the very opposite, being “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” *Verses 22, 23*. Referring to these fruits of the Spirit, the apostle says: “Against such there is no law.” *Verse 23*. That is, those who are led by the Spirit, and who yield its fruits, are in

harmony with the law; while the law is against the works of the flesh; and those who do the works of the flesh are condemned by the law, or are under it. Here we arrive at the same conclusion as in regard to *Romans 6:14*, that “under the law” simply represents a state of antagonism to, and violation of, the law; and of course no one could be in such a state if the law were not in full force. Now since all sinners are by the law condemned to death (*Romans 3:19, 6:23*), it follows again that “under the law” means condemned by the law—under the sentence of death. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 66.5*

Turning backward, we find the expression “under the law” used twice in *Galatians 4:4, 5*: “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made by a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” *SITI March 9, 1891, page 66.6*

In the third verse the apostle says that when we were children we were “in bondage under the elements of the world.” *But* (that marks a change) God sent forth his Son to redeem “them that were under the law.” We would naturally expect the redemption to be from that under which we were in bondage, which was “the elements of the world.” In the fifth verse the redemption is said to be from “under the law,” thus showing that “in bondage under the elements of the world” and “under the law” are equivalent terms. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 66.7*

Let us trace further this matter of bondage. In *verse 9* Paul says to the Galatians: “But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” Here it is implied that they were in danger of returning to a condition in which they had previously been. And what condition was that? Read *verse 8*: “Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.” That is, they were heathen. So being in bondage to the elements of the world,—the “weak and beggarly elements,”—is equivalent to being in a state of heathenism. Those who do not know God are termed heathen. But no man can know God without being a follower of Christ, as the Saviour said, “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” *John 14:6*. In the strict Bible sense, therefore, all who are not in Christ are heathen. And

therefore although Paul addressed his epistle to those who had been idolaters in the commonly-accepted sense, the argument is of universal application. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 66.8*

We conclude, then, that the “elements of the world” are simply the various forms of sin. This is still further shown by *Ephesians 2:1-3*: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked *according to the course of this world*, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation [manner of life] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Nothing but sin is meant by “the course of this world,” the “weak and beggarly elements,” and “the elements of the world.” And to be “in bondage under the elements of the world” is to be “under the law,” in a state of condemnation. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 74.1*

Christ came in the fullness of time (see *Mark 1:14, 15; Daniel 9:25*) “to redeem them that are under the law.” But in order to do this, he himself had to be “made under the law.” This is in harmony with *Hebrews 2:17*, which says: “Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” The people whom Christ came to redeem were “under the law,” therefore he was made like them, “under the law.” “He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.” *2 Corinthians 5:21*. E. J. W. *SITI March 9, 1891, page 74.2*

March 16, 1891

“My Lord Delayeth His Coming” The Signs of the Times, 17, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

“True, our Lord delayeth his coming, but as a thief suddenly he is coming to many every day, and to all he will finally come at such an hour as we think not.” This quotation isn’t from the Bible, but from a denominational newspaper. As we read it, we could not help thinking how blind so many professed Christians are upon the simple subject of the coming of the Lord. It will be noticed that the writer of the above takes it for granted that the Lord is coming. How did he learn that truth? Evidently from the Bible. But how could he learn from the Bible that the Lord is coming, without learning some of the particulars concerning his coming? That is a mystery. *SITI March 16, 1891, page 74.3*

Is the Lord “coming to many every day”? The Scriptures are silent about the many comings. Christ said, “I will come *again*,” which means only once more; and Paul plainly declares that he will come the “*second time*.” Since Christ is to come only the second time, it is evident that he is not coming to many every day. *SITI March 16, 1891, page 74.4*

Another evidence that the Lord is not coming to many every day, is that when he comes, everybody will know it. Said Jesus, “For us the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” *Matthew 24:27*. “A fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.” *Psalms 50:3*. When he comes, he will possess the throne of his glory, and will come in all the glory of the Father.” *Matthew 25:31; 16:27*. So great will be the glory that it cannot be hid from the eyes of any; so the apostle John says: “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him.” *Revelation 1:7*. *SITI March 16, 1891, page 74.5*

The extract which we quoted to begin with, implies that Christ comes at the death of individuals. This idea is overthrown by the scriptures which we have quoted, but we have direct testimony as

to how Jesus will come for his saints. Paul said to the Thessalonians that he would not have them in ignorance concerning their dead friends, and gave them some words of comfort. Did he say, "Christ has come and taken your friends to be with him"? No; he said: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which *sleep in Jesus* will God bring with him [that is, from the dead].... For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." *1 Thessalonians 4:14-17*. Thus we find that when the Lord comes, he will take all his saints at once, and not simply one at a time, and there will be a sound that will not only be heard by all who are upon the earth, but which will penetrate the graves and awake the dead. *SITI March 16, 1891, page 74.6*

It has been eighteen hundred years since our Saviour's first advent, but that is no evidence that his second coming is delayed. If a man tells us that he will come to see us at a certain time some distance in the future, we cannot accuse him of delaying his coming until the set time has passed. Christ did not set any time for his coming, but he gave certain signs, as the darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars, which should show it to be near. After rehearsing these signs, he said of his coming, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors." *Matthew 24:33*. And then he added: "Verily I say unto you, This generation [*i.e.*, the generation which should witness these signs] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." So long as any are alive who witnessed these things, there is no reason to say that the Lord delayeth his coming; and Christ's promise that he will come before the generation passes away, cannot fail. *SITI March 16, 1891, page 74.7*

It is true that the signs which the Saviour gave to mark the nearness of his coming, are long in the past. But we are not therefore justified in saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming." None but the evil servant says that, even in his heart. *Matthew 24:48-51*. True it is that to that servant the Lord will come "in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder."

Surely this should serve as a warning against any servant saying that our Lord does delay his coming.*SITI March 16, 1891, page 82.1*

The fact that the signs of Christ's coming have been fulfilled should lead us to say, not that our Lord delays his coming, but that it must be very near. If we take this position, and watch, we need not be taken unawares. Said Christ: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." *Luke 21:34*. Paul said: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." *1 Thessalonians 5:4*. "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." E. J. W.*SITI March 16, 1891, page 82.2*

"Intellect Not Sufficient" The Signs of the Times, 17, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

As to the truthfulness of Paul's description of the heathen in the first chapter of Romans, there can be no question. The testimony of ancient heathen writers themselves confirms it. Licentiousness of every description was not only permitted by the law, but was practiced alike by the common people and philosophers, and was even enjoined upon the people as a religious duty. The temples of the heathen were houses of debauchery. The gods which they manufactured for their worship, as Jupiter and Venus, were simply the reflection of their own evil natures; and since they thus deified the lusts of their own hearts, it was inevitable that they should sink into deeper sin.*SITI March 16, 1891, page 82.3*

We often hear it said that the scenes of cruelty and vice that were enacted by the heathen in their worship and in their social life are not possible in this enlightened age; but such persons forget that the civilization of Greece and Rome was fully equal to that of Europe and America, if not superior; yet the people were heathen, and most abominable was their idolatry. But like causes produce like effects. If their unthankful, vain imaginations, because of their great inventions, lifted them up so that they entirely separated themselves from God, and were left to work out the evils that were

in their own natures, the same thing will occur now under the same circumstances. The possession of intellectual activity is no safeguard against immorality, when the Giver of that intellect is forgotten. The only guard against the grossest immorality is a humble acknowledgment of God. E. J. W.*SITI March 16, 1891, page 82.4*

March 23, 1891

“Evergreen Christians” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

Psalm 1:1-3. SITI March 23, 1891, page 82.5

The secret of this prosperity is meditation in the law of God. To meditate in the law of God day and night is not simply to have certain fixed hours for devotion, nor is it simply to desire greatly to get away from business, in order to think. Meditation, at least in the sense that it is here used, does not necessarily imply solitude. It is certain that it does not here, for the meditation is to be continued day and night; and God does not want men to be hermits. The life of a monk does not furnish the best opportunities for holiness, as many have testified from experience. One great reason why is that those who shun the society of their fellow-men are shirking duty that God has laid upon them. If a man has light, he is to let it shine to the glory of God. It is the very essence of selfishness for a man to go off and live by himself in some solitary place, in order that *he* may perfect holiness, and not be contaminated by evil companionship; and such a one always reaps the reward of his selfishness, in that he has the worst possible constant companion. No man can get away from himself by going into the woods to live. *SITI March 23, 1891, page 82.6*

Meditation is not communion with self. The person who thinks about himself very much will not make advancement in the Christian life. There is only one to whom the Christian should look, and that is Jesus. When a person shuts himself up to himself, he is apt to exclude everything else. While secret devotion and meditation are necessary, if one's meditation is confined to his hours of privacy, he will not grow as a tree. David furnishes a good commentary upon

his own words in this psalm when he says: "Princes also did sit and speak against me; but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes." *Psalm 119:23*. Ridicule and abuse could not affect such a man, for he would be deaf to it. His mind is absorbed in something else. *SITI March 23, 1891, page 82.7*

Meditation in the law does not mean simply thinking about the words of the ten commandments. There is more to the law of God than what appears on the surface. The law is spiritual. That person alone properly meditates in it whose eyes have been opened to behold wondrous things in it, and who has hid it in his heart. His sole thought is, How can I live to the glory of God? He binds the law upon his hand and his head, as well as in his heart, so that his thoughts and his acts will naturally grow out of it. The one question that he will ask is, Is this right? Will it be pleasing to God? And the law of God in all its breadth, as exhibited in the life of Christ, will be that to which he will look for an answer. *SITI March 23, 1891, page 82.8*

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." The word here rendered "rivers" is not the ordinary word for river. It is a word that signifies division, and seems to refer, not to a river itself, but to the different streams into which a river is divided for irrigating purposes. "Canals of water" would more properly express the idea. It is not simply a tree on the bank of a river, but a fruit-tree in a thoroughly watered soil. Those who have seen the luxuriance of vegetation in a country where irrigation is carried on, can better understand the figure. *SITI March 23, 1891, page 82.9*

"He shall be like a tree." Constant growth is one of the characteristics of a tree. If it lives a thousand years, it grows every year. Each year of its life will see a circle added to it. It does not lose this year all that it gained last year, but it keeps all that it gains, and adds more. Only such growth as that is Christian growth. The true Christian life is continual advancement. Says the psalmist, of those who at last will appear in Zion before God, "They go from strength to strength." Nothing else can be represented by the word "growth." *SITI March 23, 1891, page 90.1*

A tree draws its nourishment from hidden sources. Its roots strike

down deep into the earth, to take nourishment; all out of sight are the processes of growth, but the foliage and the fruit are open to all beholders. So the Christian whose abundant fruit glorifies God is the one whose life is hid with Christ in God. The promise is that if we pray to God in secret, our Father, who seeth in secret, will reward us openly men may not know the petitions that are put up to God in secret, will reward us openly. Men may not know the petitions that are put up to God in secret, they may not know the agonizing cry of the heart and the flesh for the living God, even while the individual is mingling with others in the discharge of his duty, that strong temptation may be resisted; they can see only the fruit that is borne; we cannot see the tree grow-we see only the result of its growing. *SITI March 23, 1891, page 90.2*

“His leaf also shall not wither.” Many professors are like the grain that fell where there was not much earth; it sprang up quickly, but as soon as the heat came it withered. They are full of zeal for a time, but when actual conflicts come, they become discouraged. But the true Christian doesn’t wither. No matter how fiercely the sun beats down on the tree that stands in irrigated soil, its leaves are always green. Its roots take up moisture continually. So the one in whose heart is the law of God, who delights in it, and meditates in it, has a source of continual freshness. He feeds upon the living word, and grows thereby. This is the only source of growth. The one who depends on feeling and impulse may make a fair show for a time, but only the one who feeds upon Christ and his words, which are spirit and life, can continue to grow. *SITI March 23, 1891, page 90.3*

“Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper,” because he will do nothing that the law of the Lord does not prompt. The beauty of the Lord will be upon him, to establish the work of his hands upon him. How much energy is wasted in this life! How many efforts fail, simply because they are misdirected! But he whose strength is in God will not labor in vain. Such shall be called “trees of righteousness;” that is, their righteousness will be increasing with steady growth, as does a tree; and being the planting of the Lord, they will bring forth fruit, and God will be glorified in their lives. E. J. W. *SITI March 23, 1891, page 90.4*

March 30, 1891

“The Christian a Debtor. *Romans 1:14, 15*” The Signs of the Times, 17, 13.

E. J. Waggoner

“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.” *SITI March 30, 1891, page 90.5*

The apostle Paul had no sympathy with those who would say, “The world owes me a living.” For such person he had only the sharpest rebuke. His command was “that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” *2 Thessalonians 3:10*. In the language quoted above, we have the sentiment of the true missionary—one who has given his life to the service of others. *SITI March 30, 1891, page 90.6*

But Paul did not take any credit to himself for his labor for others. He considered that he was simply working out a debt. To the Corinthians he wrote: “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel!” *1 Corinthians 9:16*. *SITI March 30, 1891, page 90.7*

The question is, How did Paul become a debtor to all men? And, Did any obligation rest upon him that does not rest upon every follower of Christ? The answer to both questions may be found in the Scriptures. *SITI March 30, 1891, page 90.8*

In the very beginning of his epistle to the Romans, Paul declared himself a servant of Jesus Christ. As we have already learned, this means that he was the life-long bond slave of Christ, yet his service was a willing service of love. He had given himself wholly to Christ, and was so closely identified with him that he was counted as a son and a brother. This is the position of every Christian. “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price.” *1 Corinthians 6:19, 20*. First of all, then, the Christian owes himself and all that he has to Christ, because Christ has bought him with his own blood. *SITI*

March 30, 1891, page 90.9

But the fact that we owe ourselves to Christ, and that if we acknowledge that obligation we are to identify ourselves so completely with him that the service will not be ours but his (*1 Corinthians 15:10*), makes us debtors to all men. For Christ “died for all;” and in carrying out his work for men, he assume an obligation to all men, although no man had of right any claim upon him. Paul says that although he was in the form of God, he “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant.” *Philippians 2:6, 7*. And we are expressly exhorted to have this mind in us. Jesus himself said: “Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” *Matthew 20:26-28. SITI March 30, 1891, page 90.10*

Christ gave his life “for the life of the world” (*John 6:51*); therefore everyone who yields himself to Christ, to become identified with him and his work, becomes, like him, a servant, not alone of the Lord Jesus, but of all for whom he became a servant. In other words, the Christian is Christ’s servant; but as Christ’s work is for the world, he who becomes a sharer of that work must become the servant of the world. Paul felt this to the utmost. He felt that he owed service to everybody that was in need; and so he did. The servant owes his service to the one who pays for it. Christ had bought the service of Paul by the sacrifice of himself; and when Paul recognized that debt to Christ and gave himself to the discharge of it, the Lord turned his service in the direction I which he himself labored. The only way to be a servant of Christ is to serve those for whom he died. Wesley had some of the same spirit that Paul had, when he said, “The world is my parish.” *SITI March 30, 1891, page 90.11*

The second great commandment in the law is, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Our neighbor is everyone with whom we come in contact who is in need. Says Paul: “As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” *Galatians 6:10*. “As we have opportunity.” That indicates that we are to seek occasion of serving men, and so Paul did. *SITI March 30, 1891, page 90.12*

To the Romans Paul said in another place: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself." *Romans 15:1-3*. Thus again we learn that the work of Christ is to be the example for us; and he "went about doing good." *Acts 10:38*. Again Paul says: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." *Galatians 6:2*. *SITI March 30, 1891, page 98.1*

The trouble with too many who profess to be followers of Christ is that they do not feel any great sense of obligation. Sometimes they talk about "getting a burden" for the work, but what is that burden? It is nothing else but a sense of the debt which we owe to Christ, and consequently to the world. If a man owes a great deal of money, and has no means with which to pay it, he will necessarily feel as though he had quite a load upon his shoulders-a burden. So all that is necessary to enable a man to have a burden for souls is for him to realize how much Christ has done for him. *SITI March 30, 1891, page 98.2*

The one to whom much is forgiven will love much. Paul felt himself to be the chief of sinners, and so when he felt the pardoning love of God, he felt that he owed much service. And he never forgot how much had been forgiven him, nor how great was his dependence upon God, and so he always felt the burden of debt resting upon him. Those who have felt the burden of their sins, and who know that they are removed, will not have to strive to get a burden for souls. They will feel, like Paul, that necessity is laid upon them, and it will be the joy of their lives to discharge that obligation. E. J. W. *SITI March 30, 1891, page 98.3*

April 6, 1891

“We Have Abraham to Our Father” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

“And think not to say within yourselves. We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” *Matthew 3:9*. These are the words which John the Baptist spoke to the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism. These men were corrupt at heart. Their character is described by our Saviour himself in *Matthew 23:13-33*, where they are said to have outwardly appeared righteous, while within they were full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Both John the Baptist and our Saviour called them vipers. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 98.4*

These men were lineal descendants of Abraham, and were of the stock of Israel, but they had lost the spirit of Israel. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth. *Hebrews 11:13*. They did not expect their portion in this life, nor an earthly inheritance; but they looked for a city from heaven, and an inheritance in the new earth, wherein righteousness alone should dwell. *2 Peter 3:13*. And they knew that the possession of righteousness would be the only passport to that heavenly inheritance. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 98.5*

The Pharisees, on the other hand, had ceased to look for a Messiah who should finally reign over a righteous nation, and who should prepare subjects for that kingdom by cleansing them from sin. They did not look at their hearts, which were corrupt, but only on the outward appearance, which was fair. Consequently, seeing no sin in themselves, they felt no need of a Saviour. And so they came to John's baptism, not because they felt any need of flying from the wrath to come, but because they thought that by enrolling themselves in the ranks of the new leader, whose coming John announced, they would be sure of places of honor in the coming kingdom. They expected that that kingdom would bring simply emancipation from the Roman yoke, and would place the Jewish nation in the seat of dominion over the whole world; and they had not the slightest doubt but that they would have a place in the

kingdom, because they were children of Abraham. Their sole anxiety was to have as high a place as possible. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 98.6*

John saw through their mask of hypocrisy, and told them that they need not flatter themselves that they were children of Abraham. The promise to Abraham and to his seed would be fulfilled, but sooner than count them as the seed of Abraham, God would raise up children unto Abraham out of the stones of the ground. The inheritance was promised to Abraham, not because God regarded his person or his descent as superior to that of other men, but because he had the righteousness of faith. Consequently, those who are counted as heirs with him must be men of like character. It certainly would not be just to accept Abraham solely because of his faith in God, and to accept others solely on account of their parentage. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 98.7*

Afterward, when Christ was talking to the wicked Jews, he said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." *John 8:39*. The apostle Paul also says, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." *Galatians 3:29*. The Pharisees who came to John to be baptized thought that the fact that they could prove their descent from Abraham would insure them a place in the kingdom of Christ; but Paul shows that they had turned the matter around. They could only prove themselves children by bringing forth such works of repentance as would show them to be Christ's. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 98.8*

There are many to-day who have as erroneous ideas of the kingdom of Christ as the Pharisees and the Sadducees had. There is a large party called the National Reform Association, whose members think that Christ's kingdom is going to be established at the polls, by the votes of men. And they imagine that they are sure of a place in that kingdom, because they can trace their ancestry back to the Covenanters, or some of the Reformers. They forget that the Reformers did not follow the multitude, but took the Bible for their guide, as far as its truths were revealed to them, and that in following its teachings they suffered untold hardships. The Reformers became such solely because their love for God and his

truth was so great as to lead them to endure privation and to be considered as outcasts. And yet these men imagine that they can ride into the kingdom of God on the top wave of popularity. How terribly mistaken they will some day be. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.1*

The kingdom of Christ is promised only to the true Israel, but the true Israel are only those “whose praise is not of men, but of God.” *Romans 2:29*. Those who will be great in that kingdom must be content to be small here; and whosoever will be chief, must be a servant; “even as the Son of man [the King himself] came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” *Matthew 20:28*. He was in the form of God, and had all glory and honor, yet when he saw the lost world, he did not think his glory was a thing to be desired, so he laid it all aside, and “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.” *Philippians 2:7-10*. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.2*

“The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.” Let none therefore imagine that he is going to get into the kingdom on the strength of a profession, nor because he is a descendant of the Reformers, nor a member of a large and influential church organization. Let none think that he can be more favored than the King, and can obtain the kingdom by any other means than humble self-denial and a godly life. Neither let any think that Christ’s reception of the kingdom depends on them. He receives his kingdom from the Father (*Psalm 2:7-9; Daniel 7:13, 14*), and will admit into it only those who upon the foundation of faith have built a superstructure of virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity (*2 Peter 1:5-11*). E. J. W. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.3*

“In Christ We Have All Things” The Signs of the Times, 17, 14.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse, at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Battle Creek, Mich., March 22, 1891, by Elder E. J. Waggoner.] *SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.4*

“What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” Take this verse and read it, and commit it to memory, and then remember to say, “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.” *Revelation 12:11*. And remember that Christ gave the example of defeating Satan by the word of the testimony; every time the temptation came, he said, “It is written.” So when the clouds of darkness come, and the thick darkness gathers around, just say, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” And God *is* for us, as is shown in that he gave Christ to die for us, and raised him again for our justification. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.5*

There is peace in the thought that God works out all things after the counsel of his own will, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Then it does not matter what comes against us, for in that it comes against us, it comes against the purpose of God, and that is as sure and firm as the existence of the Almighty can make it. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.6*

Now who is against us? Satan is against us. That does not make any difference if he is. Satan has tried his power with Christ, and it has proved itself to be nothing. “All power in heaven and earth is given to me,” says Christ. Then if all power has been given to Christ in heaven and in earth, and it has been given, where is there any left for Satan?—There is none. In a contest with Christ, Satan has no power; so if we have Christ for us, nothing can be against us. *SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.7*

Some of us have been talking about the power of Satan in the past; but he has none, there is none left for him. Technically speaking, Satan is against us. Who is he?—“The prince of the power of the air.” He brings pestilence, he brings disease, he puts things in our way, and arrays them against us. But the very things which he arrays against us to work our ruin, God takes and makes for us.

They are all good. We often sing:—*SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.8*

“Let good or ill befall,
It must be good for me.
Secure of having Thee in all.
Of having all in Thee.”*SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.9*

But we often sing things that we do not believe at all. Now I would not have anyone sing these things any less, but I would have you believe them more. It is often the case that if you believe them more. It is often the case that if you took the words from the music, and put them into plain prose, there would not be anyone in a whole congregation who would believe or dare to say them. Let us believe them, not because they are in the hymn, but because they are Bible truth.*SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.10*

We are like the people who are represented by the prophet Ezekiel: “Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against [about] thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, everyone to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord.” That is it,—they say, Come, let us go to meeting, and hear the sermon. “And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not.” *Ezekiel 33:30-32. SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.11*

I say that a great many of these truths are just a song to many people. They hear them and are interested in them, and then pass on, but they do not believe or do them. But the Lord has given them for us, to both believe and to do, and they will be our strength. So everything works for good to them that love God. We cannot always see how, or tell how, but God has said it, and we know it is so. There are many things that we cannot tell why we believe, and to our very senses they do not appear to be so; but the very fact that God has promised that if we do believe them they will be so makes them so, when we take hold and believe them. We can never know

this till we do believe; but when we do believe, then we will know. So if God be for us, who can be against us?*SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.12*

Think of that lone prophet of God, Elisha. He was down in Samaria; the mountains were all around him. A whole host of armed men had come to take him. He stood alone with his servant, and that servant was afraid. He did not think in that moment, nor did he say, that the king of Israel ought to send a troop of horse, or some infantry, to defend him. The young man came to him, and said, "Alas, my master! How shall we do?" Elisha prayed, "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes." And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold the mountains were full of horses and chariots of fire round about.*SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.13*

The whole mountain and plain were filled with chariots and horses, and any one of them was stronger than the whole host of the enemy. It is as true in our case as in that of Elisha that "they that be for us are more than they that be against us," and the only thing for us to do is to get our eyes open so that we may see that this is so. What opens our eyes?—The word; it is a lamp unto our feet and a light to our path, and if we believe it, we will know that they that are for us are more than they that are against us.*SITI April 6, 1891, page 106.14*

He who is with us is the living God of Israel, who has power to turn darkness into light, and weakness into strength; and every evil thing that comes against us, he turns into a blessing to help us on our way.*SITI April 6, 1891, page 108.1*

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" Why will he with Christ also give us all things?—Because all things are in him. Note *Ephesians 1:23*, "Which is his body, the fullness of *him that filleth all in all*."*SITI April 6, 1891, page 108.2*

He that hath put on Christ is "strengthened with all might." Why?—Because God has placed Christ "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things

to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Therefore everything is in Christ. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He has all power given him in heaven and in earth. Do you not see that, this being the case, it is a foregone conclusion that when God gave Christ for us, and freely delivered him up for us all, in him he does give us all things?*SITI*
April 6, 1891, page 108.3

April 13, 1891

“Safety in the Time of Trouble” The Signs of the Times, 17, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

“The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” *Isaiah 33:14.SITI April 13, 1891, page 108.4*

This text is to some a stumbling-block in the way of their believing that the wicked are to be utterly and eternally destroyed. The difficulty arises from the supposition that the prophet means, Who of us shall suffer from the devouring fire, or, in other words, Who of us shall in the last day be found sinners? But that is not the idea of the text. The true meaning is found when we read the answer to these questions, which is found in *verse 15*: “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” From this we learn that the prophet does not mean to ask who among us shall be sinners, but who among us shall be righteous. And therefore, when he says, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” he does not mean to ask who shall be punished with this fire, but who shall escape it. Thus the text has no reference whatever to eternal torment.*SITI April 13, 1891, page 108.5*

But the question will be asked, How can it be said that the righteous shall dwell with devouring fire and with everlasting burnings? This will be understood after we have quoted a few texts. The Psalmist, speaking of the coming of the Lord, says, “Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.” *Psalm 50:3*. And again, “A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies around about.” *Psalm 97:3*. In *Habakkuk 3:3-6*, we find the following: “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory

covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand; and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting.” From the sixteenth verse of this chapter we learn that this is the description of the time of trouble that shall just precede the coming of the Lord. It is the same that is referred to in the ninety-first psalm, where we read of the “terror by night,” the “pestilence that walketh in darkness,” the “destruction that wasteth at noonday,” and the plagues which the wicked shall suffer, and which the righteous will see, although they shall be unharmed by them.*SITI April 13, 1891, page 108.6*

Now if with these texts we read *Joel 1:15-20*, which also describes the time of trouble, we shall understand about the devouring fire and the everlasting burnings. That text reads thus:—*SITI April 13, 1891, page 108.7*

“Alas for the day for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O Lord, to thee will I cry; for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee; for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.” Read also *Joel 2:1-3*.*SITI April 13, 1891, page 108.8*

We find from this text that just before the coming of the Lord there is a time of trouble for the wicked, in which there is pestilence, and plagues, and devouring fire; and that the righteous witness these plagues that are poured out upon the wicked, but are protected. The enemies of the Lord will be consumed by the devouring fire, but those who are described in *Isaiah 33:15* will be able to dwell with everlasting burnings. Of such a one Isaiah says, “He shall dwell on

high;" David says, "He shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." While the meat is cut off because the corn is withered, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, "Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure." And while the wicked behold only a desolate wilderness, he "shall behold the land that is very far off." This last reference also show that the time of the everlasting burnings is before the coming of the Lord.*SITI April 13, 1891, page 114.1*

The thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah gives the result of this time of trouble. There it is said of the earth that "the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch" (*verse 9*); and to show that it is the same everlasting burnings that accomplish this, *verse ten* says: "It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it forever and ever." Now, to show that even this is limited in duration, and that the fire ceases to burn when that upon which it feeds is consumed, read the next chapter, especially the first two verses: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God."*SITI April 13, 1891, page 114.2*

Happy indeed will be the lot of the man who in that awful time of trouble can say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in him will I trust." They who in this day of salvation wash their robes of character, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, can say in that day when God stands and measures the earth, scattering the everlasting hills, and causing the perpetual hills to bow: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." *Psalm 46:1-3*. Who would not wish for such confidence in a time when fearfulness surprises the hypocrites? E. J. W.*SITI April 13, 1891, page 114.3*

“What We Gain by Being in Christ” The Signs of the Times, 17, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse, at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Battle Creek, Mich., March 22, 1891, by Elder E. J. Waggoner.] *SITI April 13, 1891, page 114.4*

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” *Ephesians 1:3*. “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 *Peter 1:2-4*. *SITI April 13, 1891, page 114.5*

Christ has all power, and he *hath* given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Notice that the past tense is used. This has been done for us. Then why don't we have them?—For just one reason,—because we don't take them. We have been mourning for so long, and saying that we want these things; well, we can have them, they have been given to us, and there is no reason why we should not appropriate them to ourselves. *SITI April 13, 1891, page 114.6*

Suppose I come to you and say that I am very hungry, and that I would like something to eat. “All right,” you say, “just sit down here to the table, and we will get something for you.” Soon you place the best of what you have on the table, and tell me, “There it is, and now eat.” But I say, “Oh, I am so hungry, and I do want food so much!” “All right, take it and eat.” “But I am so hungry, and I do want something to eat; I have not had anything for days.” “Well, take it.” “Yes, but I do want food so bad.” You would say that I was out of my mind if I acted that way, and did not eat of the food that was so freely placed before me. *SITI April 13, 1891, page 114.7*

Said one to me the other night, “If that is the way that the Lord does with these blessings that pertain to life and godliness, we are

certainly foolish that we do not take them; but I do not think that the illustration is a fair one, because we cannot see these things that the Lord has to offer, and we can see the food.” Neither do I think that it is a fair illustration, because it does not half fill the bill.*SITI April 13, 1891, page 115.1*

Have you not often thought you saw something that you did not see? Does not your sight often deceive you? Sometimes you thought you saw a thing that you did not see, and then again you saw things that when you came to look at them closely, were not as they really appeared to be. But the word of God never deceives. Therefore I am more sure of the things promised in the word of God than if I could see them. “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all.” *Romans 4:16.SITI April 13, 1891, page 115.2*

“The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” *2 Corinthians 4:18*. We must revise our logic a little in this matter. We think that anything that we can see is all right and sure. Therefore we get hold of a house or a piece of land or some other property, and think that we have something, because there is in our possession something that we can see. But the truth of the matter is that the only things that we can depend on are the things that we cannot see. We can see the earth, and we can see the heavens, but they are going to pass away. “But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” *1 Peter 1:25.SITI April 13, 1891, page 115.3*

With the Psalmist we can say, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” *Psalms 46:1-3*. Can we say that? Brethren, that time is coming. The earth will reel to and fro like a drunken man, and be removed like a cottage, and the mountains will skip away, and pass over into the ocean. That is going to happen, and there will be some people at that time who will feel perfectly calm and trustful; but they will not be composed of man and women who have never learned to say that all things work together for good to them

that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose. The man that doubts God now will doubt him then. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." *SITI April 13, 1891, page 115.4*

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? That promise includes *all*. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." *1 Corinthians 3:21-23*. This is not in the future. All things are yours at the present time. Everything is ours, and therefore we can say with the Psalmist, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage." *SITI April 13, 1891, page 115.5*

Yes, we have everything; we are children of the King, of the Most High. What difference does it make if people do not own us? God owns us, and he knows us; and therefore, if men heap on us reproach and persecution, the only thing we can do is to pity them, and labor for them, for they do not know the riches of the inheritance. *SITI April 13, 1891, page 115.6*

April 20, 1891

“Effects of Erroneous Opinions” The Signs of the Times, 17, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

It is very common for those who are quite loose in their belief, or who do not believe much of anything, to ease their consciences by saying, “God will never condemn a man on account of his opinions; it is how a man lives that determines his condition at last.” How these people acquired such intimate knowledge of God’s plans, so as to be able to speak so definitely of what he will or will not do, is not apparent, for it is very evident from the Bible that a man’s opinions have a good deal to do in deciding his final destiny. *SITI April 20, 1891, page 115.7*

It seems never to occur to those who use the expression quoted above, that they are strangely inconsistent with themselves. The very ones who use such language will speak very slightly of one who “has not the courage of his convictions,” that is, one who holds opinions which he dare not act out. Such a man they justly accuse of leading a double life; and yet they seem to think that God will be perfectly satisfied with a man who leads such a life. *SITI April 20, 1891, page 115.8*

But the great mistake is in supposing that a man can hold opinions which will not to a greater or less extent influence his actions. The statement by Watts, the “the mind’s the standard of the man,” is but another way of expressing the truth uttered by Solomon that as a man “thinketh in his heart, so is he.” A man cannot entertain vile thoughts and still have all his actions pure. Neither can a man entertain erroneous opinions without acting in accordance with them, unless his circumstances hinder him; and in that case he is entitled to no more credit than the thief in prison is to be commended for not stealing. *SITI April 20, 1891, page 115.9*

In times past people have suffered severely on account of their opinions. When Paul says, “By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace,” he says in effect that the inhabitants of Jericho perished

because they believed not. If they had believed, they might have been saved as well as the harlot Rahab. But they were of the opinion that their gods were stronger than the God of Israel. Somebody might have said to them, "It doesn't make any difference what ideas you have about God; it is your actions that will determine your final lot." But their ideas of God had everything to do in shaping their actions, and their erroneous ideas led them into practices which caused their ruin.*SITI April 20, 1891, page 115.10*

Again we read of the children of Israel: "For some, when they had heard, did provoke; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he [Christ] grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." *Hebrews 3:16-19*. Here we have the plain declaration that it was the unbelief of the Israelites that shut them out of the promised land. "They could not enter in because of unbelief." But would they not have been allowed to enter in if they had not sinned?—Certainly; and they would not have sinned but for their unbelief. Their sin was a necessary consequence of their unbelief.*SITI April 20, 1891, page 115.11*

How was it with the inhabitants of Sodom? When Lot, who believed the warnings of the angels, went out to tell his relatives that God was going to destroy the city, "he seemed as one that mocked." They regarded him as a fanatic; very likely they thought he was losing his mind, and would have to be cared for. But the Lord did destroy the city, and all those who disbelieved perished with it. It was their opinion that they were safe enough, and in consequence of their erroneous opinion they perished.*SITI April 20, 1891, page 115.12*

We may learn a lesson from them. Indeed, their case is recorded for our admonition. Christ says: "As it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." *Luke 17:28-30*. All over the land the coming of the Lord is being proclaimed.

The sure word of prophecy foretells that his coming is now very near. Yet these things are to thousands as idle tales. Those who preach the nearness of the second advent are regarded as fanatical. It is the common opinion that the world is just in its infancy. Men say, "Well, it doesn't make any difference how we believe in regard to the coming of the Lord, if we only live right." But still the truth exists that only "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." *Hebrews 9:28*. Why will this be so?—Simply because those who do not believe that his coming is near at hand, will not be getting ready for it. *SITI April 20, 1891, page 122.1*

Let no one delude himself with the idea that he has "a right to his own opinions," and that he can believe what he pleases and still be safe at last. It is true that so far as other men are concerned he has a right to his own opinions; that is, he is not answerable to any man for what he believes; but all men are answerable to God for their opinions. No man has a right to hold an opinion contrary to what God has revealed in his word. And those who will cling to their self-assumed right to believe what they please, will find at the last that it was a dearly-bought privilege. Among those who "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," the *unbelieving* occupy a prominent place. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." E. J. W. *SITI April 20, 1891, page 122.2*

"The Working of the Mystery of Iniquity" The Signs of the Times, 17, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

Among ancient church Fathers, Origen stands at the head. Mosheim says that he "unquestionably stands at the head of the interpreters of the Bible of this [the third] century;" and Farrar says of that century and the one following, that "half the sermons of the day were borrowed, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, from the thoughts and methods of Origen." This being the case, it becomes a matter of the greatest importance, in studying the change that took place in the church, to know what were the thoughts and methods of Origen, especially in regard to the Bible.

These we find very plainly set forth in the first chapter of his fourth book, "*De Principiis*," in which he treats of the inspiration of the Scriptures. Having stated his theory of the "threefold sense" of Scriptures, he says, in section 15:—*SITI April 20, 1891, page 122.3*

"But since, if the usefulness of the legislation, and the sequence and beauty of the history, were universally evident of itself, we should not believe that any other thing could be understood in the Scriptures save what was obvious, the word of God has arranged *the certain stumbling-blocks, as it were, and offenses, and impossibilities, should be introduced into the midst of the law, and the history.* In order that we may not, through being drawn away in all directions by the merely attractive nature of the language, either altogether fall away from the (true) doctrines, as learning nothing worthy of God, or, by not departing from the letter, come to the knowledge of nothing more divine. And this also we must know, that the principal aim being to announce the 'spiritual' connection in those things that are done, and that ought to be done, where the Word found that things done according to the history could be adapted to these mystical senses, he made use of them, *concealing from the multitude the deeper meaning*; but where, in the narrative of the development of super-sensual things, there did not follow the performance of those certain events, which was already indicated by the mystical meaning, the Scripture *interwove in the history (the account of) some event that did not take place, sometimes what could not have happened, sometimes what could, but did not.* And sometimes a few words are interpolated which are not true in their literal acceptation, and sometimes a larger number. And a similar practice also is to be noticed with regard to the legislation, in which is often to be found what is useful in itself, and appropriate to the times of the legislation; and *sometimes also what does not appear to be of utility*; and *at other times impossibilities are recorded* for the sake of the more skillful and inquisitive, in order that they may give themselves to the toil of investigating what is written, and thus attain to a becoming conviction of the manner in which a meaning worthy of God must be sought out in such subjects." *SITI April 20, 1891, page 122.4*

In order that the reader may see a practical illustration of Origen's thoughts and methods in regard to the Bible, we quote further, from

section 16:—*SITI April 20, 1891, page 122.5*

*“Nor even do the law and the commandments wholly convey what is agreeable to reason. For who that has understanding will suppose that the first, and second, and third day, and the evening and the morning, existed without a sun, and moon, and stars? And the first day was, as it were, also without a sky? And who is so foolish as to suppose that God, after the manner of a husbandman, planted a paradise in Eden, towards the east, and placed in it a tree of life, visible and palpable, so that one tasting of the fruit by the bodily teeth obtained life? And again, that one was a partaker of good and evil by masticating what was taken from the tree? And if God is said to walk in the paradise in the evening, and Adam to hide himself under a tree, I do not suppose that anyone doubts that these things figuratively indicate certain mysteries, the history having taken place in appearance, and not literally.... And the attention reader may notice in the Gospels innumerable other passages like these, so that he will be convinced that in the histories that are literally recorded, circumstances that did not occur are inserted.”**SITI April 20, 1891, page 122.6*

*“And if we come to the legislation of Moses, many of the laws manifest the irrationality, and others the impossibility, of their literal observance.”**SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.1*

When we are told that Origen stood at the head of Scripture interpreters of his age, the question naturally arises, With such a view of the Bible, what need was there of interpretation? Why not let the Bible go entirely? It would, indeed, have been better if Origen had utterly repudiated the Scriptures, instead of undermining their authority while professing to believe them. But before we call attention to the inevitable result of such teaching, we wish to quote a short passage from another renowned Father of the same school, namely, Clement of Alexandria. Says he:—*SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.2*

“For many reasons, then, the Scriptures hide the sense. First, that we may become inquisitive, and be ever on the watch for the discovery of the words of salvation. Then it was not suitable for all to understand, so that they might not receive harm in consequence

of taking in another sense the things declared for salvation by the Holy Spirit. Wherefore the holy mysteries of the prophecies are veiled in parables—preserved for chosen men, selected to knowledge in consequence of their faith; for the style of the Scriptures is parabolic.”—*Miscellanies, book 6, chap. 15.SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.3*

We have not quoted these things for the sake of holding those men up to reproach, but that the reader may learn a lesson from the past that will keep him from wandering from the right way at the present time. Let us, therefore, see what was the inevitable result of such teaching in regard to the Bible.*SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.4*

First, the acceptance of these views naturally tended to discourage the common people from attempting to study the Scriptures. Why should they trouble themselves to try to understand a book that was purposely couched in language that none but philosophers could understand? So Neander tells us that as early as the time of Clement of Alexandria there were those who, when exhorted not to follow certain heathen practices, replied: “We cannot all be philosophers and ascetics; we are ignorant people; we cannot read; we understand nothing of the Holy Scriptures; why should we be subjected to such rigorous demands?”*SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.5*

Second, the key of knowledge being thus taken away, the people would naturally take men for their authority, instead of the Bible. Not only would they unquestioningly accept the statements of men as to the meaning of Scripture, but, not having any incentive to read the Bible for themselves, they would soon have no knowledge of its contents, except as retailed to them by their teachers. And in a short time the Bible would sink entirely out of sight, and those self-constituted interpreters of the Bible would stand in its stead.*SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.6*

Third, human reason being thus placed above the Scriptures, and put in place of them, there would necessarily arise a demand for some ultimate authority, to whose decision final appeal could be made. For, while the common people were resting with calm and unthinking confidence in the superior knowledge of their

philosophical teachers, those teachers, having each one supreme confidence in his own wisdom, would naturally fall to disagreeing among themselves. Thus, from this setting up of human reason above the Bible, arose church councils and finally an infallible pope. Thus the Saviour's statement that the truth of God was revealed unto babes, was ignored; and the Scriptures being by a natural process removed from the people, there was nothing to hold them, and gross immorality and licentiousness inevitably resulted. And this tide of evil, instead of being checked by knowledge in the sciences and the arts, was rather accelerated by it. The truth of the words of Paul concerning the heathen was again demonstrated: —*SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.7*

“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man; ...wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts.” *Romans 1:22-24. SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.8*

In the above recital the reader can see that we have simply traced in brief the rise of the Papacy, with all of its abominations. But what of it? What similar danger is imminent at the present time, which we may avoid by considering the above facts? The story is quickly told, and the thoughtful reader will see that the saying is as true as it is trite, that “history repeats itself.” E. J. W.*SITI April 20, 1891, page 123.9*

(Concluded next week.)

April 27, 1891

“The Working of the Mystery of Iniquity. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 17, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

A short time ago Union Theological Seminary, of New York City, one of the principal Presbyterian theological seminaries in this country, founded a new professorship of Biblical Theology, to which it called Rev. Charles A. Briggs, D.D., who has for a long time occupied the chair of Hebrew in the same institution. Professor Briggs is a very learned man, a natural teacher, and one who has through his natural and acquired gifts an unbounded influence over the young men with whom he comes in contact. As a theologian he occupies a high place.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.10*

On taking the chair, Professor Briggs delivered an inaugural address, on the subject of “The Authority of the Scriptures,” and the New York *Independent* of January 29 contained an authorized syllabus of it, from which we extract a few leading points. The first paragraph is as follows:—*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.11*

“Divine authority is the only authority to which man can yield implicit obedience. There are historically three great fountains of divine authority: 1. The Bible. 2. The Church. 3. The Reason.”*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.12*

Here we see that the Bible is made only once source of divine authority, and the church and human reason are put on a level with it, and both are regarded as divine. Thus the way is opened for men to reject the simple statement of the Bible whenever it conflicts with human reason. The Bible is not to be the instructor and guide of reason, but reason is to be the judge of the Bible.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.13*

Again, after speaking of the superstition of “Bibliolatry” as equal to that of Mariolatry, he says, “The divine authority is not in the style or in the words, but *in the concept*.” That is, the authority lies not in the Bible itself, but in what the learned teacher conceives concerning it;

and since different teachers have different conceptions, we shall have many different standards of divine authority, necessarily requiring that there shall be some ultimate tribunal, as a pope or a council.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.14*

The fourth barrier to the Bible is given as follows:—*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.15*

“Inerrancy.—This confronts historical criticism. There are errors in the Scriptures which no one has been able to explain away, and the theory that they were not in the original text is sheer assumption, upon which no mind can rest with certainty. The Bible itself nowhere makes this claim. The creeds of the church nowhere sanction it. It is a ghost of modern evangelicalism to frighten children.”*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.16*

Here again we have human reason exalted above the Bible. On what grounds is it claimed that there are errors in the Bible?—On the same grounds on which Origen made the same claim, namely, that there are things in it that are not agreeable to human reason. This being admitted, it follows that the number of errors claimed to be in the Bible will differ according to different men’s conception of it. Thus again the Bible ceases to be even one source of divine authority, and fallible human reason becomes supreme.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.17*

Finally, to pass by other things, Dr. Briggs says:—*SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.18*

“The neglect of the church as a means of grace retards the rise of the Bible itself as a means of grace, and dulls our sensitiveness to the presence of God. The reason has also its rights, its place, and importance in the economy of redemption. *I rejoice in the age of rationalism*, with all its wonderful achievements in philosophy. I look upon it as preparing men to use their reason in the last great age of the world. It is impossible that the Bible and the church should ever exert their full power until the human reason, trained and strained to the utmost, rise to the heights of its energies and reach forth after God and his Christ. Let us remove every incumbrance out of the way of a new life; the life of God is moving Christendom; the spring-time of a new age is about to come upon us.”*SITI April 27, 1891,*

But to this “new age” the words of the wise man will most aptly apply: “Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us.” *Ecclesiastes 1:10*. And that time which this “new age” will be like is the Dark Ages. Like causes invariably produce like effects. The exaltation of human reason above the Bible, by ancient “Christian philosophers,” notably Origen and Clement, resulted directly in the Papacy and the destroying of the Bible; Professor Briggs stands on the same ground that they did; and just in proportion as such views become popular, will the same results follow. *SITI April 27, 1891, page 123.20*

It is a sad fact that, although Professor Briggs’ views have met with a hearty protest from many religious journals, notably the *Independent*, those views are gaining in popularity. Professor Briggs is not the only theological professor who holds such loose views concerning the inspiration and authority of the Bible; and a very few men in places where the young men resort, who are to mould the thought of the people at large, can soon cause their loose ideas to permeate the great mass of people. *SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.1*

It is time for people to awake. While many are watching the progress of religious legislation, and tracing in it a likeness to the growth of the Papacy, few realize that the great danger lies primarily and chiefly in the growing disrespect to the Bible as the supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice, and the tribunal to which human reason must yield. Many men who will fight to the last every semblance of religious legislation will, because of their neglect of the Bible, or disregard for it, suffer themselves unconsciously to be bound in the most cruel religious despotism. Let them cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. “To the law, and to the testimony.” The Bible not only contains the truth, but is itself the whole truth, and the only truth that makes free. He who acknowledges its authority, who studies it prayerfully, seeking the aid of the Holy Spirit, and who hides it within his heart, esteeming it more than his necessary food, will alone know true religious liberty, and be saved from the foolish ignorance which will engulf even the

most learned who trust in their own reason. E. J. W.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.2*

“Judged by the Law” The Signs of the Times, 17, 17.

E. J. Waggoner

[Synopsis of a discourse on the first part of *Romans 2*, by Elder E. J. Waggoner, at the late General Conference.]*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.3*

The first chapter of Romans, after its introduction, can be summarized as the condition of man without God, and how he gets in that condition. The cause of this condition can be stated in one word-unbelief*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.4*

Coupled with unbelief is self-exaltation; with faith, humility. They lost God, “because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” *Verse 21*. They attributed everything to *themselves*, and as *self* was advanced, faith in God decreased, till they were in the darkness of idolatry.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.5*

Men, in the days of Plato, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius, taught what they called moral science; Confucius taught moral precepts. But what they all lacked was to tell men how to do what they taught to be right. Even these men who taught moral science and virtue were themselves practicing the things they condemned, and coming far short of doing what they set forth as moral duty.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.6*

While those teachers tell us what to do, but fail to give us power to do it, the religion of Jesus Christ not only makes known what is right, but gives us ability to perform that which is good. Thus when Christ is not woven into the teaching, the very effort to teach morals is simply the old pagan science of morals, which is immorality.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.7*

All admit that the State should not teach Christianity; but some say we must teach morals without it. Moral science aside from Jesus

Christ is immorality; it is sin.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.8*

The works of the flesh are clearly stated in the last part of chapter one. These are found in every individual that has not been converted to Christ; we denounce the heathen for doing these things, but “there is no respect of persons with God” (*Romans 2:11*), and he condemns those things in us just the same, and shows us that we are no better than they.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.9*

“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.” *Romans 2:1*. Whoever knows enough to condemn the evils of the heathen is condemned himself, for he does the same things.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.10*

The first part of *Romans 2:1* may be summed up in, God is no respecter of persons. He will render to every man according to his deeds. In the judgment nothing is taken into account but a man’s works. “Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” *Revelation 22:12*. “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” *Matthew 16:27*.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.11*

The character of the works shows the amount of faith in Christ. A simple profession will not do. “Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?” God does not respect our person or profession. We may call ourselves Christians, and pretend to keep the law, and pity the poor heathen, but God classes all together who fail to have good works.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.12*

“As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.” *Romans 2:12*. This with the verses following shows that the law is the standard by which ever man in the world will be judged.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.13*

But what is it to keep the law?—It is to keep all its precepts; our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees, which was only an outward form. If we hate, it is murder (*Matthew 5:22*); if we have impure thoughts, it is adultery (*verse 28*); if we have an impure heart, we violate all the rest of the law. We may be ever so strict in outward Sabbath observance, and adhere closely to the outward obligations of all the rest of the law, but an impure heart renders every act sinful.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.14*

“When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves.” *Romans 2:14.SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.15*

God has by various agencies placed enough light in the heart of every man to lead him to know the true God. Even nature itself reveals the God of nature. And if a man in the darkest heathenism has a desire to know the true God, he will, if necessary, send a man around the world to give him the light of truth.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.16*

So every man that is finally lost will have rejected light that, if cherished, would have led him to God.*SITI April 27, 1891, page 130.17*

May 4, 1891

“The Development of the Mystery of Iniquity” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 18.

E. J. Waggoner

Last week we noted the similarity between the theological professors of this age and those of the third century, and pointed out the rapid progress that is being made toward a new Papacy. We showed how the inevitable result of the loose theological teaching that is becoming so popular, is to banish the Bible entirely from common life. This, of course, is naturally followed by a loose state of morals, because, the people being deprived of the Scriptures, there is nothing to restrain them. Even if the Bible is not wholly removed from the common people, its sanctions and prohibitions are nullified in proportion as such teaching as that to which we call attention becomes popular. *SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.18*

This week we have to note another step in the progress toward setting the Bible aside, and substituting for it the teachings of man. The following, from the literary columns of the *New York Independent* of March 12, will set the matter quite clearly before the reader. It is concerning a little pamphlet, entitled “Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine. Prepared for Use in Mixed Schools.” (Stevenson & Foster, Pittsburg, Penn.) The *Independent’s* notice in full is as follows:—*SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.19*

“With the approval of the managers of the Pennsylvania Reform School at Morganza, near Pittsburg, the chaplain of the institution and the vice-president of the board prepared this little manual of fifty pages, which has been in use long enough to justify the high expectations entertained of its usefulness. It is not a colorless, emasculated system of doctrine, which might be accepted by all simply because it contained nothing positive. It follows a broad and truly Christian path, teaching nothing militating against the doctrines of any church that retains faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is simple language, convenient in arrangement, clear, concise, positive in the general treatment of the essential truths of the Christian religion, and neither goes beyond the Scripture nor brings

up the mooted points of Scripture. As the Pennsylvania school contains many Catholic youth, a copy of the catechism was sent to Bishop Phelan, of the Diocese of Western Pennsylvania, who, after examination, wrote as follows to Mr. J. A. Quay, superintendent:—*SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.20*

“The book, “Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine,” is the only book of religious instruction that has come under my notice which claims to keep within lines of belief common to all who profess faith in Jesus Christ. It is, therefore, well suited for a text book in public institutions, where Catholics and Protestants at all times receive instruction. *Catholics can accept all that the book contains*, and the important truths of the Catholic religion which it does not contain can readily be supplied by the priest who conducts special services for the Catholic inmates of the institution in which the book is read.’*SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.21*

“The bishop here suggests an important point. The manual, while teaching the fundamental truths of Christianity, can for the rest be supplemented by pastors of any denomination. Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, or Presbyterians will find in the minds of the students a scriptural basis of truth upon which, if they please, they may build up the distinctive dogmas of their various creeds. The Rev. James Allison, D.D., of Pittsburg, a ‘pillar of orthodoxy,’ a hearty believer in, and a staunch defender of, Calvinistic doctrine, connected with the Morganza Board for many years, and much experienced in this difficult field of labor, writes to the superintendent:—*SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.22*

“As you know, I am a Presbyterian minister, and editor of the *Presbyterian Banner*, as well as chairman of the Committee of Instruction and Discipline of the Pennsylvania Reform School. After careful examination of “Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine,” I am happy to say that I believe this little work to be admirably adapted to be useful in reform schools and similar institutions, and also that it *contains nothing to which anyone can reasonably object.*’*SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.23*

“In these days of church unity and plans for reuniting the separated fragments of the church universal, there is an earnest desire to

remove the practical barriers existing between churches which hold much in common. The use of the little book, "Easy lessons in Christian Doctrine," is evidence that there is, and that there may always be, a comprehension and an acceptance of the fundamental truth of pure Christianity, separate and apart from the denominational theories and practices which have divided the church catholic. We bespeak for the collection careful examination on the part of teachers, and considerate judgment on the part of ministers and prelates." *SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.24*

We do now know of any seemingly trifling thing that has more significance than this notice. It shows that the way has been found for the long-looked-for union of Catholics into practically one church. Surely, when Presbyterians of "the most straitest sect" can unite with Catholics in studying Christian doctrine from the same book, a union of all denominations is not a Utopian dream. The union has already virtually been effected. The *Independent* says that this book contains all the essentials of the gospel, and all agree that no reasonable person can object to anything in it. *SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.25*

But does not the reader see that this takes away the only argument that "National Reformers" and their allies have ever raised to show that there cannot be in this country any union of Church and State? They have claimed that for such a thing to be effected the State would have to make an alliance with some one denomination, and that all others would object to this. Here, however, we have the way all cleared for just what we have all the time said would take place. All the denominations will agree on the "fundamental truths" which are common to all, so that there will be no more real separation and division in "the church catholic." All, therefore, that is needed to effect a perfect union of Church and State is for the State to recognize, protect, and support the teachings and practices of this "church universal." *SITI May 4, 1891, page 130.26*

And this is already done, to some extent, at least, for we find that this catechism has been for some time in use in a State school of Pennsylvania. With this start, and with the fact that many churchmen and statesmen have been looking for a book setting forth the "nonsectarian principles of Christianity," which could be

used in the public schools, it will readily appear to the thoughtful reader that the question of Church and State in the United States is rapidly approaching a settlement on the basis of an effective union.
E. J. W. *SITI* May 4, 1891, page 130.27

(Concluded next week.)

May 11, 1891

“The Development of the Mystery of Iniquity. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 17, 19.

E. J. Waggoner

There is, however, another feature that must not be overlooked. We have frequently shown that such a union would be an exact image of the Papacy, that was formed in the early centuries. We have copies of this little book, “Easy Lesson in Christian Doctrine,” and we find, what was to be expected, that it is essentially Roman Catholic. It must have been written by a Roman Catholic; and the fact that it is so heartily indorsed by professed Protestants is a striking comment on the extent to which Catholic dogmas have already permeated the entire church. The reader is well aware that while professed Protestants pride themselves on their “liberality,” Catholics never give countenance to anything that is not distinctively Catholic. But a few extracts from the book will show the nature of the teaching which will remove the barriers and reunite “the separated fragments of the church universal.” In this connection let it be remembered that Catholic writers very commonly speak of Protestant denominations as the “separated fragments.” We have space to notice only a few features of the book. On page 15 we find the doctrine of purgatory thus set forth:—*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.1*

“*Question*—Where did Christ’s soul go after his death?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.2*

“*Answer*—It descended into hell.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.3*

“*Q.*—Did Christ’s soul descend into the hell of the damned?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.4*

“*A.*—The hell into which Christ’s soul descended was not the hell of the damned but a place or state of rest.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.5*

“*Q.*—Who were in this place of rest?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.6*

“A.—The souls of the just, who died before Christ.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.7*

“Q.—Why did Christ descend into this place?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.8*

“A.—To announce to those spirits that were in prison the joyful tidings of their redemption.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.9*

“Q.—When did the souls of the just who died before Christ go to heaven?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.10*

“A.—When Christ ascended into heaven.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.11*

“Q.—Where was Christ’s body while his soul was in limbo, or the place of rest?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.12*

“A.—In the sepulcher, or grave.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.13*

“Q.—On what day did Christ rise from the dead?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.14*

“A.—Christ rose from the dead, in body and soul glorious and immortal, on Easter Sunday, the third day after he was crucified.”*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.15*

On page 23 we find the following concerning witchcraft:—*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.16*

“Q.—What is witchcraft?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.17*

“A.—Witchcraft is to try, with the help of the devil, to injure others in their person or property.”*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.18*

From this it appears that only that which is an attempt to injure somebody’s person or property can be considered witchcraft. Dealings with the devil that seem to have a good object are legitimate, according to this standard of faith.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.19*

Mariolatry, or the exaltation of Mary to the place of Christ, is thus

taught, on page 38:—*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.20*

“Q.—How was a Redeemer promised?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.21*

“A.—To show how hateful sin was to him God cursed the serpent which had deceived Eve, condemning him to crawl upon the ground and to eat the dust; besides, he said enmity should exist between the serpent and the woman, but in the end the woman would crush his head.”*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.22*

On page 7 we find all necessity for the Bible thus summarily disposed of:—*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.23*

“Q.—How can we know God on earth?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.24*

“A.—By learning the truths which he has taught.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.25*

“Q.—Where shall we find the chief truths which God has taught?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.26*

“A.—We shall find the chief truths which God has taught, in the Apostles’ Creed.”*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.27*

And then follows the Apostles’ Creed, which was devised by the Catholic Church in the third or fourth century.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.28*

This is sufficient to show the distinctively Catholic nature of the teaching of these “Easy Lessons in Christian Doctrine,” which are recommended to all sects. But one point more remains to be shown, and that is the essentially immoral tendency of the teachings, a thing that is inevitable in any doctrinal teaching that sets aside the Bible in its purity. On pages 12 and 13 we find the following deliverance concerning sin:—*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.29*

“Q.—What is actual sin?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.30*

“A.—Actual sin is any willful thought, word, deed, or omission, contrary to the will of God.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.31*

“Q.—Are all actual sins equally great?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.32*

“A.—No; all sins are not equally great; there are grievous offenses against the laws of God, and there are also small offenses against the law of God.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.33*

“Q.—What are the effects of grievous offenses against the law of God?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.34*

“A.—Grievous offenses against the law of God kill the soul, by depriving it of the true spiritual life of grace, and make it liable to eternal punishment in hell.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.35*

“Q.—What are the effects of small offenses against the law of God?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.36*

“A.—Small offenses against the law of God do not rob the soul of the true spiritual life of grace; but they hurt the soul by lessening its love for God and by disposing to great sins.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.37*

“Q.—Is it a great misfortune to fall into grievous sin?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.38*

“A.—It is the greatest of all misfortunes.”*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.39*

This ends the chapter on sin, leaving it to be inferred that it is not a “misfortune” to fall into a “small offense,” as indeed it cannot be if such an offense does not rob the soul of the true spiritual life of grace. Notice, also, that to fall into “a grievous offenses” is only a misfortune, and that each individual is left to decide for himself what are grievous offenses and what are small offenses. Of course everyone will draw the line at the farthest possible limit. And here, again, we see the necessity for a church council or an infallible pope to which all such questions may be referred. But the above confirms our statement that the tendency of the teaching of these

“Easy Lessons” is toward immorality, and this is corroborated by the following, on pages 30 and 31:—*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.40*

“A.—Are impure thoughts and desires always sinful?*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.41*

“A.—They are not sinful if they displease us, and we try to drive them from our mind as soon as possible.”*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.42*

So, according to this, all that one has to do is to *try* to drive the impure thoughts from his mind, and when he finds that he cannot, he can entertain them with the comfortable feeling that he is not committing sin.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.43*

But this is surely enough. Further comment is unnecessary. No one who reads this can fail to see that the image of the Papacy is rapidly forming in this country, and that a union of Church and State must necessarily be the legalizing of sin or the full development of the mystery of iniquity. And let it not be forgotten that all this arises from neglect of the simplicity of the Bible. Whoever would keep clear from papal delusions, let him cleave to the inspired word, not as set forth in catechisms, by authority, or interpreted by popes or councils, or any third party, but solely as taught by the Spirit of truth. E. J. W.*SITI May 11, 1891, page 139.44*

May 18, 1891

“How Righteousness Is Obtained” The Signs of the Times, 17, 20.

E. J. Waggoner

[Synopsis of a discourse on *Romans* 3, by Elder E. J. Waggoner.] *SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.45*

The basis of the lesson of the evening is the latter half of the third chapter of Romans, beginning with the nineteenth verse: “Now we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” *SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.46*

Verses 21-23 contain, in condensed form, all that is treated of in the remaining verses of the chapter. The remainder of the chapter is an amplification of that which has gone before. In this chapter also occurs the climax of the thought of the epistle. In the first part of this chapter is emphasized the fact that God makes no distinction of persons; works alone are taken into account in the judgment. But while it is true that a tree is known by its fruits, it is also true that it is not within the province of men to judge of those fruits. God alone is judge. He looks upon the heart, while man can judge only from appearances; therefore, while the works of men may seem good to their fellows, to God, who sees what man cannot see, they are known to be corrupt. *SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.47*

Against, the just shall live by faith. How much of a man’s life must be just?—All, every moment; for the just shall live by faith. But by the deeds of the law shall no act be just. This is a hard saying, but one that must be believed, for it is what the Bible says. No deed that we can do can be just by the law only. By faith alone can a man or any act of his be just. The law judges a man by his works, and the law is so inconceivably great that no human act can rise to its height. There must, therefore, be a Mediator through whom justification shall come. And that justification properly belongs to him to whom it is granted by reason of his faith. *SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.48*

The heart unrenewed is desperately wicked. Only evil can come from a wicked heart. To bring forth good deeds there must be a good heart, and only a good man can have a good heart. But, as all have sinned and come short, therefore all the deeds of humanity are vitiated.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.49*

The law itself is the standard of perfect righteousness, but Christ is the truth, the way, and the life. In Christ is the perfect righteousness of the law, and the grace to bestow the gift of his righteousness through faith. And of this the prophets themselves are witnesses, for they preached justification through Christ, by faith.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.50*

When a man seeks to justify himself by his deeds, he only heaps imperfection upon imperfection, until, like Paul, he counts them all as loss, knowing that there is no righteousness but that which is of Christ by faith.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.51*

There is but one thing in this world that a man needs, and that is justification-and justification is a fact, not a theory. It is the gospel. That which does not tend to righteousness is of no avail, and not worthy to be preached. Righteousness can only be attained through faith; consequently, all things worthy to be preached must tend to justification by faith.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 139.52*

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” It is well understood that no act of ours can make right that which is past, but it is just as true that we cannot be justified in any present act any more than we can render the past perfect. We need the righteousness of Christ to justify the present just as much as to make perfect the imperfect deeds of the past.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 155.1*

In the case of the publican and the Pharisee, the one who put no trust in his own works went down to his own house justified, but he who desired to assume righteousness in himself failed of justification. Everyone can have it who will ask for it, but each must come to the level of all other sinners, and there receive it with the rest, saying, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”*SITI May 18, 1891, page 155.2*

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” What is “redemption”? It is a free gift to us, but it has been paid for. The blood of Christ has paid for it. We are exhorted to consider his greatness, that we may know that although the thing to be done is beyond our comprehension, the power which is to accomplish it is also beyond our knowledge.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 155.3*

“To declare his righteousness” for the putting away of our sins. It is he that puts away our sins, and if we but yield ourselves to him, they will be remitted utterly. Christ grants no indulgences, but his righteousness remits the sins that are past, and keeps the heart free from sin in the present, so long as his righteousness fills that heart.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 155.4*

Faith is the beginning of all wisdom; it lies at the foundation of all knowledge. The child would never learn anything if it did not believe what it is told. Now, that being so in physical things, why can we not be as reasonable in spiritual things?*SITI May 18, 1891, page 155.5*

Redemption comes through the creative power of Christ, and that is why I love to think that he is the Creator of all things; for he who created the worlds out of nothing, and who upholds all things by the word of his power, can by that same word create in me a clean heart, and preserve that which he has created. To him is all power, and also all glory.*SITI May 18, 1891, page 155.6*

“It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good-pleasure.” “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.”*SITI May 18, 1891, page 155.7*

June 1, 1891

“An Example of Faith” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 22.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse on *Romans 4* at the late General Conference.] *SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.8*

In the fourth chapter of the book of Romans we have faith in a concrete form. The narrative of the lives of Abram and Sarai in connection with the birth of Isaac, furnish a practical example of justification by faith. *SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.9*

Abram was not justified by works; but he believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Abraham received the seal of circumcision. Why? To cause him to believe?—No, but because he had believed. It was a seal of the righteousness which he had by believing. The promise to Abraham and to his seed was that he should be heir of the world. This promised inheritance was to be for an “everlasting possession.” *Genesis 17:8*. Therefore it was a covenant of righteousness, sealed by a seal of righteousness, and the inheritance was to be a righteous inheritance, which none but the righteous can gain. 2 *Peter 3:13*. *SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.10*

The promise to Abram depended upon one thing—his having a son. Twenty-five years elapsed from the time the promise was made until it was fulfilled. “Abram staggered not at the promise of God,” but Sarai did, and “Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarai.” She undertook to help the Lord to carry out his plan. But Hagar was a slave, and her child could be nothing but a slave, born after the flesh. *SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.11*

The seed promised Abram were to be free men, not slaves, therefore nothing was gained by this plan of Sarai’s. The time came when Sarai realized that the only thing for her to do was to believe that God was able to carry out his promise without her help. Then “through faith” she “received strength to conceive seed.” The birth of Isaac was a miracle. From a human standpoint it was utterly

impossible for Abram and Sarai to become the parents of a child. She conceived by the power of God.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.12*

Abram and Sarai did nothing to gain the promise, except to believe, and yet the child of the promise was their own child. So with Christians. Nothing can be done to gain the righteousness of Christ save only to believe the promises. We are told to believe the promises. God has promised to make us righteous, and the only way to obtain that righteousness is to believe that God is able to impute it.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.13*

When men are content to believe God, and submit themselves to him, there is power in his promises to work out their righteousness for them, without any power of their own. How are men made righteous, or partakers of the divine nature?—"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that *by these* ye might be partakers of the divine nature." The power lies in the promise of God. How can we make the promises effectual to us?—By believing them. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Confess your sins, believe that God forgives them as he has promised, and the promise is yours, your sins are forgiven.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.14*

The promises of God may be likened to "promissory notes." How many may have these notes?—"Whosoever will." They are good for a certain amount of blessing. That amount can never be drawn in full, because God is able "to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think." Men take a promissory note to the bank and get the gold on it. Christians take the promises of God to him and cash them for a blessing.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.15*

How can God give us righteousness when we are so sinful? We cannot understand how, nor do we need to inquire. It is just as great a miracle for God to make an unrighteous man righteous as it was for him to create the world. If a man calls a thing which is not as though it were, he tells a falsehood; but when God calls a thing which is not as thought it were, the very fact of his calling it makes it so. God not only makes our hearts righteous when there is no

righteousness there, but he does more than that, he makes our hearts righteous when there is nothing there but unrighteousness.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 155.16*

A man is just as much an infidel who does not believe that God can speak righteousness into his heart as a man who, by the theory of evolution, does away with the Mosaic record of creation. No limit can be put upon the power of God.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 171.1*

We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. We get to be the children of God in the same way as Isaac was born,—by believing, as Abraham and Sarah believed. The promise is to him “that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly.”*SITI June 1, 1891, page 171.2*

There was much implied in the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Through no other son could the promise of the inheritance come. Christ could not come into the world except through Isaac. Cut off Isaac, and what hope was there of a Saviour?—None; Abraham, to all appearances, would cut off all hope of his own salvation.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 171.3*

Wonderful is the faith here exhibited. Abraham believed that God could raise Isaac up again, and yet the very one (Christ) through whose power he believed Isaac would be raised up, had not come, and could not come except through Isaac. Nevertheless God had promise, and Abraham believed, although he was called upon to do that very thing which to human sight would cut off all hope of even having the promise fulfilled.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 171.4*

The promise itself was immutable, and that immutable promise was confirmed by an immutable oath. Therefore God is under obligation to fulfill his promises to all who claim them. The very throne and existence of God are pledged to this, and not to do it would be for God to deny himself.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 171.5*

By and by God will come and say, “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Christ is the sacrifice here referred to. It is through him we come. He is the surety of the covenant. E. J. W.*SITI June 1, 1891, page 171.6*

June 15, 1891

“The Peace of God” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

[Abstract of a talk on *Romans 5* at the late General Conference at Battle Creek.] *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.7*

“Therefore being justified by faith,” that is, being made conformable to the law by faith, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The only way that man can be made conformable to the law, and live free from condemnation, is by having faith in the promises of God. In Christ there is no unrighteousness, therefore there is nothing but righteousness. By believing on Christ, the Christian has the righteousness of Christ. *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.8*

But does not James say that there must be works, or the faith is of no avail? It is true that faith is made perfect by works. *James 2:22*. But it is by faith and faith alone that men are justified. The very text which speaks of Abraham’s being justified by faith, states that the works were only the outgrowth of underlying faith, and that by this work the scripture was fulfilled which says: “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” Works are the outgrowth of faith. “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good-pleasure.” We give ourselves into the hands of Christ. *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.9*

He comes and *takes up his abode* with us. We are as clay in the hands of the potter; but it is Christ who does all the good works, and to him belongs all the glory. *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.10*

“We have peace with God.” What is peace? It is not a feeling, but a fact. Many think that they must experience a “certain feeling” which they will know is the “peace of God.” But they have never had the peace of God, and therefore cannot know what kind of feeling it ought to be. Satan might give a certain happy feeling, and if the Christian had only the feeling to go by, he would be deceived. The Lord does not deal in feelings, but in facts. Peace is the opposite of

war, strife, emulation. We are either at peace with God or else at war. If at war, it is because we are carrying on rebellion. *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.11*

How do we fight God?—By following sinful practices. Anyone knowingly indulging in one sinful practice is warring against God. God is a God of peace. Christ left his peace with his followers. “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.” Between God and his dear Son in heaven there is a “counsel of peace.” They counsel for the peace of man. There is only one condition on which man can have that peace-unconditional surrender, surrender all to God, and then there is peace in the heart, no matter what the feeling may be. *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.12*

“Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them.” “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” What rich comfort in these words! Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” So his peace is likened to the continual flowing of the river, and the never-ceasing roll of the ocean wave; therefore it matters not what the feeling is, for if all sins have been confessed, God is faithful and just to forgive them; and we are at peace with him. The condition of peace is the condition of being justified by faith. *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.13*

“By whom [Christ] also we have access by faith into this grace [unmerited forgiveness and favor] wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Righteousness can be wrought in men day by day by the same power by which Isaac was born of parents who were practically dead. When people once gain this experience, the next thing they will be constrained to rejoice in the hope of the coming of the Lord. *SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.14*

We live in the present, not in the future. Read *1 Peter 1:5-9*. Salvation belongs to us to-day just as much as it will when in the kingdom of God. No one but ourselves can deprive us of it. Says Peter, “Receiving [present time] the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” Our present salvation is our only hope of a future salvation. “Kept by the power of God” is the expression used by Peter, and it denotes precisely the same condition—“being

justified by faith”—in the fifth chapter of Romans.*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.15*

The same power that will make men immortal in the life to come justifies them—makes them conformable to the law—by being in harmony with it every day. Says Paul in the letter to the Philippians, chapter three, verse twenty-one: “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, *according to the working* whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.16*

In *Ephesians 3:16* Paul, in an inspired prayer, prays that they might be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, “according to the riches of his glory.” The grace of God is equal to the glory of God. God’s throne is a throne of glory, and the grace wherein we stand is backed by the glory of God.*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.17*

“We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience.” Some say that tribulation worketh *impatience*. This is not true. If a man is not justified by faith, tribulation will develop the impatience that is in him. How is it, then, that tribulation worketh patience? Let these texts answer: “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” *1 Peter 5:7*. “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.” *Psalms 55:22*. “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” *Matthew 11:28*.*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.18*

He takes the heavy loads away. What is that burden?—Anything that worries or vexes us. It matters not whether it be a small thing—a little trial—or a great one. Cast it on the Lord. We rejoice in tribulation because we have Christ with us, and we cast all the burdens on him. He is able to bear them. He has already borne them for all the world, so we cannot add to his burden.*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.19*

How do we get rid of the burdens?—Give them to Christ, and then say, “He has them.” And he has them whether you feel any different or not. Then you will experience the truth of the words, “I will give you rest.” It is rest even though the physical pain still racks the body, for Christ bears that tribulation, and you are lifted up above all

pain.*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.20*

How did the martyrs go to the rack and the stake with songs of joy on their lips? Was that mere bravado?—No; Christ bore their burden, and in him they had peace. Out of a full heart they sang their praise to him. Thus they were happy and joyous, and scarcely noticed the pain while the flames crept around them. We will have to “pass through great tribulation.” It may be the lash on the naked flesh, or it may be the thumbscrew. Human nature shrinks from such torture. In Christ we can bear it. Gain an experience in him now, and in the trying time he will not forsake you. He can bear that great burden as well as a small one.*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.21*

Christ will be ours then as well as now, and the life we live will be in him. No man in this world will be able to stand in that time unless he has previously learned the lesson of faith. Now is the time, while the lesson may be learned under easy circumstances. Great as will be the tribulation of that time, we will pass through it with rejoicing. That rejoicing must be learned now. E. J. W.*SITI June 15, 1891, page 171.22*

June 22, 1891

“Life in Christ” The Signs of the Times, 17, 25.

E. J. Waggoner

[Extract from a discourse on *Romans 5*.] *SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.23*

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more*, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Many act and talk as if Christ was dead, and irrecoverably dead. Yes, he died; but he rose again, and lives forevermore. Christ is not in Joseph’s new tomb. We have a risen Saviour. What does the death of Christ do for us?—Reconciles us to God. He died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. Now mark! It is the *death* of Christ that brings us to God; what is it that keeps us there?—It is the life of Christ. We are saved by his life. Now hold these words in your minds: “Being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” *SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.24*

Why was the life of Christ given? “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Then Christ gave his life that we might have life. Where is that life? And where can we get it? In *John 1:4* we read, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” He alone has life, and he gives that life to as many as will accept it. *John 17:2*. Then Christ has the life, and he is the only one who has it, and he is willing to give it to us. Now what is that life? *Verse 3*: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” Has a person who *knows* Christ eternal life?—That is what the word of God says. *SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.25*

Again he says in *John 3:36*: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do we know that we have this life? This is an important question. “We *know* that we have *passed* from *death* unto *life*, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no

murderer hath eternal life abiding I him.”*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.26*

Says one, “We know that we will get eternal life by and by.” Yes, that is true, but there is something better than that; we get it *now*. This is not a mere theory, it is the word of God. Let me illustrate: Here are two men—brothers—to all appearances they are alike. But one is a Christian, and the other is not. Now the one that is a Christian, although there is nothing in his external appearance to indicate it, has a life that the other has not. He has passed from *death*—the state in which the other one is—to life. He has something that the other has not got, and that something is *eternal life*. The words, “No *murderer* hath eternal life abiding in him,” would mean nothing if nobody else had eternal life abiding in him.”*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.27*

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; *because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*” *1 John 5:10*. God cannot lie, and so when we say that the words of God are not so, we make liars of ourselves. Now, according to this scripture, we make God a liar, if we believe not the record that God gave of his Son. What, then, must we believe in order to clear ourselves of that charge,—of not believing this record and thus making God a liar? The next verse explains it: “*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*”*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.28*

Some people are afraid that this idea of justification by faith, and eternal life, will get men away from the commandments. But nobody but the one who is justified by faith—who has Christ’s life—does keep the commandments; for God says that we are justified by faith, and if we say we are not, then we make God a liar,—we bear false witness against him, and we break the commandment. In the verse just quoted we are told what we are to believe in order to be cleared from the charge of making God a liar. We are to believe that God has given to us eternal life in Christ. As long as we have the Son of God, we have eternal life. By our faith in the word of God we bring Christ into our hearts. Is he a dead Christ?—No; he lives and cannot be separated from his life. Then, when we get Christ into our

hearts, we get life there. He brings that life into our hearts when he comes. How thankful we ought to be to God for this?*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.29*

When Jesus went to Bethany, he said to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life." We have already read about passing from death unto life; how was that done?—Only by a resurrection. In Christ we have a resurrection to a new life. Note the following: Paul prays that he may know him and the "*power of his resurrection.*" What is the power of that resurrection? In *Ephesians 2:4, 5, 6, and 7* we read: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us [made us alive] together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)."*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.30*

Notice, he *hath* done this, and he "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We were dead, we are quickened, and we are raised up to sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. We must have, and we can have, the life of Christ to-day; for when he comes, he will change our vile bodies by the same power by which he *has* changed our hearts. The heart must be changed now. It cannot be changed except by the life of Christ coming in and abiding in it. But when Christ is in the heart, we can live the life of Christ, and then when he comes, the glory will be revealed. He was Christ when he was here upon earth, although he did not have a retinue of angels and glory visible about him. He was Christ when he was the Man of Sorrows. Then, when he ascended, the glory was revealed. So with us. Christ must dwell in our hearts now, and when he comes and changes these bodies, then the glory will be revealed."*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.31*

In *Hebrews 5:2* we learn that the work of the high priest was to be one of compassion. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him [Christ] to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." *Hebrews 2:17*. What is done by the compassion of Christ?—Strength is given to us. What benefit is the compassion of Christ to us?—He know the strength we need. He knows what we need, when we need it, and how we need it. So the work of Christ as priest is for one thing—to deliver us from sin. What

is the power of Christ's priesthood?—He is made priest, “not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an *endless life*.” That is the power by which Christ delivers you and me from sin this day, and this hour, and every moment that we believe in him. *SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.32*

Christ was immortal before he came to earth. He was God. What is the essential attribute of divinity?—Life. If Christ was immortal, and therefore had life, how could he die?—I don't know. That is a mystery; but I am so glad that One did die for us, who had life that could not be touched by anything, and that was successful in resisting the attacks of the enemy. Then so powerful was he that he could lay his life down and take it up again. Why was it that no one could take life away from Christ?—Because he was sinless, and if there ever had been another man on earth who lived without sin he too could never die. But there never was but the One who trod this earth who was perfectly sinless, and that was Jesus Christ of Nazareth. No one could take life away from Christ. The wicked had no power to kill him. He laid his life down. If he had not chosen to do that, no one ever could have taken it from him. *SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.33*

God raised him up, “having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” It was not possible that death should hold Christ. He had power in his life that defied death. He laid down, and took death upon himself, that he might show his power over death. He defied death, he entered right into the realms of death—the grave—to show that he had power over it. Christ laid down his life; and when the time came for him to do so, he took it up again. Why was it that death could not hold him?—Because he was sinless. Sin had spent all its force on him, and had not marred him in the least. It had not made a single blot upon his character. His was a sinless life, and therefore the grave could have no power over him. It is that same life which we have when we believe on the Son of God. Give your sins to the Lord, and take that sinless life in their place. *SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.34*

The life of Christ is divine power. In the time of temptation the victory is won beforehand. When Christ is abiding in us, we are justified by faith, and we have his life abiding in us. But in that life

he gained the victory over all sin, so the victory is ours before the temptation comes. When Satan comes with his temptation, he has no power, for we have the life of Christ, and that in us wards him off every time. Oh, the glory of the thought, that there is life in Christ, and that we may have it!*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.35*

The just shall live by faith, because Christ lives in them. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Yes, we are crucified with Christ; but is Christ dead?—No, he has risen again; then we have risen with him. But we are in the flesh. That is true; but in the flesh there may be the divine life that was in Christ when he was in the flesh. E. J. W.*SITI June 22, 1891, page 171.36*

July 6, 1891

“Disestablishment vs. Religious Liberty” The Signs of the Times, 17, 27.

E. J. Waggoner

The sentiments uttered by the speakers at a recent annual meeting of the English “Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control” are very suggestive as showing that it is not necessary to have what is technically known as an “established church” in order to have all the pernicious effects of religious legislation. They demonstrate, also, the fact that very many who seem to be zealous workers for religious liberty, do not have any just conception of what religious liberty really is. The meeting in question was presided over by Sir George O. Trevelyan, M.P., who, in his opening speech, which was the principal one of the evening, spoke as follows:—*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.37*

“Addressing himself to those who held aloof from the work of the society because from a religious movement it had not become a political one, he said that the very words of the charge answered themselves. It did not require that a man should be a very deep Greek scholar in order to know that the meaning of the word ‘political’ was ‘that which concerns the State.’ Their object was to separate the Church from the State, and if that was not a political movement, he did not know what was, and he should specially like to put the question to those who appeared to think that religious equality was to come down like manna from heaven, and that it was not now as ever to be won by human effort, human courage, and human self-sacrifice. [Cheers.] Now, as ever, the motive power of their cause was religious, but their weapons were human, and as long as those weapons were honorably, safely, and valiantly used, they were not ashamed to look in the face anyone who told them that they ought not to bring their cause into the arena of politics. In a free country no cause was ever successful until it became political. [Cheers.] *SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.38*

“But it was not only a question of taking the aggressive in politics; it was likewise a plain question of self-defense. There were in that hall, he supposed, a good many ministers of religion, and tomorrow

certain newspapers would taunt them with being partisans and politicians, and yet those very newspapers would tell them that if they only maintained the church in Wales for another generation they would kill out dissent in the Principality. [Laughter.] The Nonconformist ministers of religion were warriors, and why should they not be when they were fighting for the life of churches whose life was as dear to them as their own? All the religious endowments of the country, all the prestige of State connection, not in Wales only, was conferred on one religious body in order that it should be able to extinguish all the others; and as long as that was the case, then, not in Wales only, but elsewhere, political action on the part of churches that were threatened became not only a necessity and an obligation, but absolutely a religious duty. [Cheers.]”*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.39*

The above is taken from the report in the London *Daily News*, and, while not *verbatim*, is a correct summary of a portion of the honorable gentleman’s speech. Before making any comments, it may be well to have before us a statement made at the same meeting by Sir Wilfrid Lawson: “It is said that ministers of religion should not be political, but it might just as well be said that politicians should not be religious. For his part he regarded a man who had no politics as a human cabbage or an idiotic oyster.”*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.40*

In all this we see a failure to distinguish between things that differ. While as long as society exists there must be force for its legislation, and consequently must be politics (in the best sense of the word), it does not follow that politics and religion must have any connection. Politics concerns the entire body of citizens, as a body, while religion is solely a matter between an individual and God. But when men fail to distinguish between things that differ, it soon results in there being no difference between those things; and so the result of such movements as the one under consideration is to make religion and politics identical. Thus the separation of Church and State, when gained, will be a separation only in name.*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.41*

One of the most celebrated of England’s poets wrote:—*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.42*

“How small of all that human hearts endure.

That part which laws of kings can cause or cure.”*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.43*

But men, and women too, nowadays seem to think that legal enactment is a panacea for all the ills that human flesh and human souls are heir to. If they could but come to know practically the religion of Jesus Christ, they would know that true and perfect freedom is obtained in it alone, and that the freedom which it bestows may be enjoyed in the most autocratic government as well as in the freest democracy. The apostle Paul rejoiced in true religious freedom while he was held a prisoner in chains by the despotic Nero. On the other hand, the “Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control” will, if successful, make religious liberty in England a much rarer thing than it now is.*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.44*

One not acquainted with the situation would naturally think that the disestablishment of the Church in England would be a long step in the direction of religious liberty; but from the extracts quoted above it can readily be seen that the society which is working for the establishment in England is almost identical with what is known as the National Reform Association in America. The Society in England is dissatisfied because one church has the monopoly of State emoluments; its members are not opposed to church members and ministers engaging in politics in behalf of (a form of) religion, but they want that all the churches should have an equal chance. Likewise, the National Reform Association is opposed to the idea of one church or sect being singled out as the recipient of special favors by the government, but is most heartily in accord with religious legislation in favor of all religious bodies as a confederated whole.*SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.45*

A religio-political movement may be intensely religious, but it can never be godly or Christlike. Sir George Trevelyan said that “their cause was religious, but their weapons were human.” But with human weapons only human results can be obtained; consequently the “religious liberty” resulting from the success of such a movement can be nothing else than liberty as regards a *human* religion. But a human religion is of no use whatever so far as

salvation is concerned, and salvation is supposed to be the ultimate object of religion, although it is too often lost sight of. In contrast with the words of Mr. Trevelyan are the words of Paul." "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [human], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." *SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.46*

The lesson that we commend to the thoughtful reader is to learn to distinguish between true and false movements in behalf of religious liberty. The term "religious liberty" is getting to be popular, and we need to be on our guard lest we be carried away with some movement having that as its watchword, while it is actually, though unconsciously, not only tending toward, but is really in itself, religious bondage. We must remember that true religion does not confine itself to church and society lines, but is an individual affair. Human nature averages the same in all parts of the world, and in all societies; in every established church there are many who are advocates and actual possessors of real religious liberty, while dissenting bodies, as bodies, are very far from being acquainted with the real meaning of the term. *SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.47*

From the prophecies we are sure that religious despotism and religious persecution will prevail in all the world before the end comes; but that can only be when a vast majority of the people assent to such a condition; and that majority will be made up from all classes and all denominations. Majorities, as well as minorities, are always composed to individuals, and they take the color of the sentiments of the individuals composing them; therefore religious despotism can be prevalent only when the majority of people are ignorant of true religious freedom, and have a religious despotism in their own hearts. As in days past, relentless and bloody persecution was carried on in the name of Christianity, so in the time to come, religious liberty-which is but another name for pure Christianity-will be the rallying cry of the men who will enact and enforce the most intolerant laws. *SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.48*

Let us remember that the only religious liberty is "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," and that this is obtained, not

by human weapons, but by the weapons which the Holy Spirit furnishes, and which it alone can wield. It is not the possession of any society of men, as a society, whether that society be religious or political, or not, neither is wholly an affair of the individual heart, and can be properly advocated only by those whom the Son has made free. It can no more be gained by political action than can love be gained by personal violence. All such action is death to that which it vainly thinks to gain. Jerusalem which is above is alone free, and the kingdom of which it is the capital is not of this world; hence, its children cannot fight with human weapons of any sort. May the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES be so thoroughly acquainted with Christ and the freedom which he alone can give, that they will not be deceived by vain movements for religious liberty. E. J. W. *SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.49*

Hamburg, Germany, June 2, 1891. SITI July 6, 1891, page 171.50

July 20, 1891

“What the Gospel Teaches” The Signs of the Times, 17, 29.

E. J. Waggoner

“And he said unto him, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” *Mark 16:15, 16*. These words were plainly spoken by our Saviour, after his resurrection, and shortly before his ascension. They are perfectly in harmony with his words recorded in *Matthew 24:14*, that “this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.” There is no mistaking the extent of territory in which the gospel must be preached—nothing less than the whole world. And how long must it be preached? Read the whole of *Matthew 24:14*: “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Then the gospel is to be preached until the end. The end here referred to is the same that is mentioned in *verse 3*, “The end of the world.” That this “end of the world” is in connection with the coming of the Lord is shown by the words of the disciples in the verse last mentioned, and by the words of Christ in *Matthew 13:40-43; 24:30, 31*. *SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.51*

The fact that, by divine command, the gospel is to be preached in all the world until the coming of the Lord and the end of the world, proves conclusively that until the Lord comes, a necessity for its being preached will exist in all the world. This needs no further argument, for it is nowhere disputed. We will, therefore, turn our attention to a consideration of what the gospel is, and what creates the necessity for its being so long and so extensively preached. *SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.52*

The word “gospel” means, literally, “a good message;” Webster’s first definition is “glad tidings.” According to its derivation, it might be applied to any good news; but in the Bible it is used with exclusive reference to one thing; what that thing is we may easily learn from the Bible itself. *SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.53*

In *Luke 2:10* we find these words, addressed by the angel of the Lord to the shepherds in the field: "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings [a gospel] of great joy, which shall be to all people." The next verse tells what this gospel is: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Then the gospel which is to be preached to all people is the announcement of a Saviour. It is from this that Webster derives his specific definition of the gospel as, "especially, the good news concerning Christ and his salvation."*SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.54*

But the simple heralding of Christ, without stating the nature and object of his work, would not be the preaching of the gospel. The "good news" consists in the fact that Christ the Lord is a *Saviour*. That Christ comes as a Saviour necessarily implies that there are people to be saved. Turning to *Matthew 1:21*, we read the angel's declaration before the birth of Christ, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." Paul says (*1 Timothy 1:15*), "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." So it is manifest that the preaching of the gospel consists in the announcement that Christ will save people from sin.*SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.55*

But while the gospel is the good news that Christ brings salvation from sin, it is evident that that simple announcement would not suffice to produce the desired results, viz., that men should believe and be baptized. For there are millions of people who virtually say that they are "rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," not knowing that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." No matter how destitute a man may be, it would be of no use to offer him money if he were ignorant of his necessities, and perfectly satisfied with his condition. So no man can feel any interest in the gospel as a means of salvation from sin, unless he (1) knows what sin is, and (2) is convinced that he is a sinner, and (3) understands the nature and results of sin so as to realize that it is something to be shunned. Therefore the gospel, with its announcement of salvation from sin, must also make known what sin is. This it does, as we shall see.*SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.56*

John the evangelist, so called because it is he who more than anyone else dwells on the love of God and Christ in the salvation of man, defines sin. He says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for *sin is the transgression of the law.*" *1 John 3:4*. In harmony with this, Paul says that "where no law is, there is no transgression." *Romans 4:15*. And "sin is not imputed when there is no law." *Romans 5:13*. Volumes could not define sin more clearly than do these three texts. We have found out, then, (1) that "gospel" means good news; (2) that the gospel of the Bible is the good news of a Saviour-Christ the Lord (*Luke 2:10, 11*); (3) that Jesus saves from sin (*Matthew 1:21; 1 Timothy 1:15*); and (4) that "sin is the transgression of the law" (*1 John 3:4*). *SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.57*

So that, in short, the gospel announces the way by which man may be saved from the transgression of the law, and from the consequences of such transgression. Sin is the disease; the gospel is the remedy. And since the gospel is to be preached in all the world, until the coming of the Lord, it follows that "all the world," yea, "every creature," has sinned. This we read in *Romans 3:23*, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." *SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.58*

It must also be true that sin will be in the world till the Lord comes. And this we verify by a comparison of *Genesis 6:5* and *13:13* with *Luke 17:26-30*. But since sin is the transgression of the law, it also necessarily follows that "the law" will be in full force in all the world until the coming of the Lord. In other words, Sin is the disease, and it cannot exist where there is no law. *Romans 4:15*. The disease, sin, does exist in "every creature" in "all the world;" for the remedy, the gospel, is to be thus extensively made known, and the Great Physician would not send the remedy where it is not needed. "They that be whole need not a physician; but they that are sick" (*Matthew 9:12*); and therefore the law, by which alone "is the knowledge of sin"—the disease—is binding upon "every creature" "in all the world." Now since "the wages of sin"—the transgression of the law—"is death" (*Romans 6:23*), it is important that all men know just what that law is the transgression of which brings death, and just what its nature and requirements. These points will, therefore, next claim our attention. E. J. W. *SITI July 20, 1891, page 171.59*

July 27, 1891

“The Law and the Gospel Co-extensive” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 30.

E. J. Waggoner

In *Nehemiah 9:13* we find the following words in the Levites' confession to God: “Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai; and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments.” Here we have reference made to true laws and good statutes. A good and true law would in every case condemn sin; therefore the law here referred to is of the same character as that which, being transgressed, makes it necessary for the gospel to be preached. This law was given upon Mount Sinai; so we examine the law there given to see if it meets the requirements. *SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.60*

In the nineteenth chapter of Exodus we have a description of the preparation of the people to hear the law from Sinai. We read: —*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.61*

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.” *Exodus 19:10, 11. SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.62*

“And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.” *Exodus 19:16-18. SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.63*

This was the condition of Mount Sinai when from it God spoke “true laws, good statutes and commandments.” *Chapter 20, verses 3 to 17*, contains the words which God spoke at that time. We quote

them in full:—*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.64*

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.65*

2. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.66*

3. “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.67*

4. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.68*

5. “Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.69*

6. “Thou shalt not kill.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.70*

7. “Thou shalt not commit adultery.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.71*

8. “Thou shalt not steal.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.72*

9. “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.73*

10. “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet

thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbors." *SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.74*

These are the words which the Lord spoke in the hearing of all the people, from the midst of the fire and smoke upon Mount Sinai. Soon afterward he spoke to Moses, as follows:—*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.75*

"Come up to me into the mount, and be there; and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them." *Exodus 24:12.SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.76*

Accordingly, we find by reading the remaining verses of the chapter, that Moses went up into the mount, and remained there with God forty days and forty nights. While he was there, the Lord gave him minute directions concerning the building of the sanctuary. Then we read:—*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.77*

"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." *Exodus 31:18.SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.78*

"And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand; the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." *Exodus 32:15, 16.SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.79*

Then we are told how Moses, as he drew near the camp, saw the golden calf, and the people dancing around it, "and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath [at the foot of] the mount." But this was not the end of the matter; for very soon we read thus:—*SITI July 27, 1891, page 171.80*

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest." *Exodus 34:1.SITI July 27,*

We will now read the words of Moses, as he rehearses the whole matter to the Israelites, just before his death. We begin with the point last quoted:—*SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.1*

“At that time the Lord said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark. And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me. And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.” *Deuteronomy 10:1-5. SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.2*

One more quotation on this point. In the course of Moses’ final address to the people, in which he rehearsed all their history in the wilderness, he repeated the substance of the ten commandments, and at the close he said:—*SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.3*

“These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.” *Deuteronomy 5:22. SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.4*

The gist of these texts of Scripture may be expressed as follows: The good and true laws which were spoken upon Sinai (*Nehemiah 9:13*) were the ten commandments, found in *Exodus 20:3-17*; these ten commandments were written by God himself on two tables of stone; and there was nothing spoken to the people by the Lord, except that which was placed upon the tables of stone (*Deuteronomy 5:22*). Therefore the words found in *Exodus 20:3-17*, and no others, form the ten commandments, the perfect law of God. *SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.5*

But what has this to do with the gospel? Just this: We found that the gospel is the remedy for sin, which is the transgression of the law; and that the law must be in force as long and as extensively as the gospel is preached. We were concerned to know what law it is the transgression of which makes it necessary for the gospel to be preached, and we have now found it. One more step completes the identification. It is this:—*SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.6*

Paul says (*Romans 7:7*): “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not know sin, but by the law; for I had not know lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” The law here referred to must be the same law that is referred to in *John 3:4*, because it is one that points out sin; it does this because it is “holy, and just, and good.” Therefore it is the law to which the gospel relates. And what law is it?—It is the law which condemns unlawful desire by saying, “Thou shalt not covet.” But this is the last one of the ten commandments. Therefore we have proved to a demonstration that the ten commandments of *Exodus 20:3-17*,—those commandments which were spoken by Jehovah, in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the smoke, and of the thick darkness, and which were written on two tables of stone and deposited in the ark,—form the law which points out sin. They are the law which has been universally trodden underfoot, making it necessary that the gospel should be preached in all the world, to every creature; and, therefore, it is as plain as the Scripture can make it, that they are still binding upon every creature in every part of the world. If it were otherwise, there would be no sin, and, consequently, no need of the gospel. Whoever, therefore, says that he is not under the jurisdiction of those ten commandments, virtually says that he has no sin; and whoever says that he has no sin, places himself outside of the gospel plan; for “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” and no others. His salvation has reference only to those who have transgressed the law of God, the ten commandments. *SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.7*

The above argument is, we think, so conclusive as to make it almost unnecessary to notice the assumption that the gospel of Christ is that which points out sin. If this were true, we should have Christ introducing the gospel into the world in order to save men from the rejection of it! That is, the remedy for the disease creates

the disease, the remedy being introduced to cure that which without it would never have existed! Such an absurdity is too puerile to be entertained for a moment. The gospel must relate to something outside of and prior to itself. Since the gospel saves from sin, it is evident that sin existed before the gospel, and that it continues to exist so long as the gospel exists; and since sin is the transgression of the law, it is just as evident that the law existed before there was sin, and, consequently, before there was any gospel, or any need of it, and that it exists as long, at least, as the gospel exists. E. J. W.*SITI July 27, 1891, page 235.8*

August 3, 1891

“Nature of the Law” The Signs of the Times, 17, 31.

E. J. Waggoner

Having found that the law must be in force wherever the gospel is preached, it is very proper that we learn something in regard to its nature. What we have already learned would teach us that it is just the opposite of sin, for “sin is the transgression of the law.” But we will see what the Bible has to say further on this subject. *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.9*

We first quote the words of the Psalmist, in *Psalm 19:7, 8, 10, 11*:
—*SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.10*

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.” *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.11*

This comprises all that may be said of the law; for nothing can be more than perfect. Nothing can be added to that which is perfect, neither can anything be taken away without leaving it imperfect. Therefore the testimony of David teaches us that when God spoke his law it was in just the form that he wanted it, and that he never designed that any change should be made in it. *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.12*

In perfect accord with the above testimony, the apostle Paul says: “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” *Romans 7:12*. This being so, we would naturally expect that the keeping of the commandments would make the keeper thereof perfect and holy. This we find is the case. Moses said to the Israelites:—*SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.13*

“And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these

commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.” *Deuteronomy 6:25.SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.14*

Observe how perfectly this agrees with what we find in the New Testament: Moses said that to keep the law is righteousness. Of course the opposite of righteousness is *unrighteousness*, and John tells us that “all unrighteousness is sin.” *1 John 5:17*. Then we must conclude that sin is just the opposite of obedience to the law; and that brings us to the original definition: “Sin is the transgression of the law.” *1 John 3:4*. Unrighteousness means any deviation from that which is right; and since all unrighteousness is sin, we know that the slightest deviation from right is a transgression of the law. To show that this reasoning has solid scriptural foundation, we quote *Psalms 119:96:—SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.15*

“I have seen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad.” And to show how broad and far-reaching it is, we have only to read *Hebrews 4:12:—SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.16*

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.17*

Thus we learn that the law is so broad that it takes cognizance of the very thoughts of the heart, and not alone the outward acts. As illustrating this, we have our Saviour’s words in the sermon on the mount:—*SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.18*

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” *Matthew 5:27, 28*. See also *verses 21, 22.SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.19*

Other instances might be given; but this is sufficient to show the breadth of the commandments of God. The sixth commandment may be broken by a single angry thought that may never be expressed; and the seventh may be as effectually broken by a single wrong desire as by the overt act.*SITI August 3, 1891, page*

Surely the law of God is broad; and since in all its prohibitions and requirements it is perfect, we can readily and naturally accept the words of the wise man, in *Ecclesiastes 12:13*:—*SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.21*

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is *the whole duty of man*.” *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.22*

This statement, we repeat, is a natural consequence of what has preceded; for the keeping of a perfect law will make a man perfect, and nothing more than perfection can be required. There is no sin conceivable that is not forbidden by the ten commandments, and no righteous act or thought that is not commended and enjoined by them. Of course it would be impossible to go through the whole list of possible thoughts and deeds, in order to demonstrate this; but it will be found true in every case. Things may be mentioned which at first sight may seem to many persons to be outside of the ten commandments; but a little careful thought will show that nothing can be done that is beyond or outside of the perfect law of God. We have not the slightest fear of being brought to confusion because of this statement. We repeat, Nothing more than the duties enjoined in the ten commandments can be required of any man. *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.23*

In this connection it will be well to notice *Matthew 5:20*, which some may think opposed to the statement last made, but which strongly supports it. We quote: “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” This text would be opposed to the statement made in the preceding paragraph if it could be shown that the scribes and Pharisees kept the law perfectly, but not otherwise. Indeed, this verse could not teach that it is a man’s duty to do more than the ten commandments, without contradicting the nineteenth verse, which says that “whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” It must be, then, that the scribes and Pharisees, while professing to keep the

commandments, did not do all that the law requires. This we shall find was the case, if we read *Matthew 23:25-28*:—*SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.24*

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.25*

The scribes and Pharisees pretended to keep the law, and so far as their outward acts were concerned, they did keep it; but Christ, who “knew what was in man,” saw that in their hearts they despised the law, and that they grievously transgressed it, but yet in such a way that men could not know their wickedness. Such obedience, Christ taught will not suffice to gain an entrance into heaven. Unless your obedience to the law is more thorough than that, you can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven. *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.26*

Here we see the difference between obedience only to the letter and obedience to the spirit of the law. The law is spiritual, and therefore the spirit of it must be obeyed; but some people think on this ground to excuse themselves for disobeying the law. Say they: “The Lord reproved the scribes and Pharisees for their obedience to the letter of the law, therefore we should not think ourselves bound by the letter; if we keep the spirit, that is sufficient.” But mark, The Saviour did not say that our righteousness must be entirely different from that of the scribes and Pharisees, but that it must *exceed* it. To *exceed* means “to pass or go beyond;” and by using that word the Saviour showed that we must keep the law as well as the scribes and Pharisees did, and a great deal better. Not only must the law be kept outwardly, but it must be obeyed from the heart. He did not reprove the Pharisees for refraining from open adultery, but he reproved them for the lust with which their hearts were filled, and which nothing but their love for the applause of men kept them from

manifesting openly. Christ did not reprove them because they refrained from actual murder, but because they cherished envy, hatred, and enmity, thus as effectually breaking the sixth commandment as though they had actually taken human life. E. J. W. *SITI August 3, 1891, page 235.27*

(To be continued.)

August 10, 1891

“Nature of the Law. (Concluded.)” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 32.

E. J. Waggoner

A moment's thought will show anyone the folly of supposing that the law may be kept in spirit and not in letter. Can a man worship gods of gold, or stone, or brass, and yet have a proper regard for the God that made heaven and earth? Can a man blaspheme the name of God, and at the same time have perfect love and reverence in his heart? Is it possible to wantonly violate the letter of the sixth commandment, by taking human life, and yet have no trace of enmity, but only perfect love in the heart? Will a man deliberately and persistently take the goods of others, if he has no covetous desires in his heart? And does not everybody know that the committing of adultery is only the outward manifestation of the lust that burns within? There can be but one answer to these questions. Even so there can be no spiritual obedience without obedience to the letter as well. *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.28*

The statement of the wise man, that to keep the commandments is the whole duty of man, and of Christ, that whosoever shall do and teach them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven, prepares us for the truth stated by the apostle in *Romans 2:13*:—*SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.29*

“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.30*

Since to keep the commandments of God is the whole duty of man, or course the one who keeps the law will be justified; a man can never be justly condemned when he does his whole duty. We will not, at this time, inquire just how comprehensive the term “the doers of the law” is, nor whether or not there are any such. For the present we shall be content with the truth, which allows of no exception, namely, that “the doers of the law shall be justified.” *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.31*

In *Romans 6:23* we read that “the wages of sin is death.” But if a

man never sins, he will never receive the wages therefor, and consequently the doer of the law will live. And this, again, is no more than we find plainly stated in *Romans 10:5*: “For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.” The man whom the law justifies—the one who is really a *doer* of all its requirements—will certainly live. Now it is a self-evident fact that when God made a perfect, holy, and just law, he designed that all his subjects should obey it. And since the law, when it is kept, gives life, we can see the force of the apostle’s statement, that the law “was ordained to life.” *Romans 7:10*. As we shall hereafter see more fully, the law was given that man might ever keep in harmony with God’s will, in which condition he must necessarily have life. *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.32*

There is just one more point which we wish to bring out concerning the nature of the law. Let the reader mark it closely; for in the future consideration of this subject it will often be referred to, as it really covers the whole ground; upon it everything else depends. David says (*Psalms 119:172*): “My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness.” This is really nothing more than is brought out in *Psalms 19:7*, and other texts; but it leads to another text which materially widens the range of our view of the law of God. In *Isaiah 51:6* we read:—*SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.33*

“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.” *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.34*

Abolish the righteousness of God? Of course not; but what is the righteousness of God? The very next verse tells us of what the Lord, through his prophet, is here speaking. We proceed: “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law.” The conclusion to be drawn is very evident. The people who know righteousness are they in whose hearts God’s law is enshrined; they know righteousness, because the law is itself righteousness (*Psalms 119:172*); and not only is it righteousness in

the abstract, but it is *the righteousness of God*. This is an expression which the apostle Paul often uses in referring to the law. *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.35*

What an exalted idea of the law of God does this give us! To say that it is perfect may convey various ideas to different persons, for many would be apt to measure the law by their own standard of perfection; but when we learn that it is “the righteousness of God,” we know that it must be infinite in its breadth. The law is a transcript of God’s character, a photograph of character which is infinite in its perfection. It is his nature represented in words, for the benefit of his creatures, so that they may know what is required of them if they would be partakers of the divine nature. God says to man, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” *1 Peter 1:16*. But without some description of the holiness of God, it would be impossible for man to know how he should order his life; for “the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” *Jeremiah 10:23. SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.36*

Since the law is “the righteousness of God”—a brief yet comprehensive description of his character—it may properly be termed the way of the Lord. And so in *Isaiah 55:8, 9* we have an additional evidence of the exceeding greatness of that law: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” The holiness of God’s law is just as much superior to any goodness that man possesses as God is greater than man. The law of God, then, is very justly called his way, and since those who become acquainted with God by walking in the way with him are at peace (*Job 22:21*), it follows that a proper term for the law is, “the way of peace.” It is the ten commandments, then, to which Paul refers, when, speaking of the universal wickedness of mankind, he says: “Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not know; there is no fear of God before their eyes.” *Romans 3:16-18*. This idea is still further proved by *Isaiah 48:18*: “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.37*

The law of God is also called *the truth*. “Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.” *Psalms 119:142*. It is the very perfection of truth, since it is the expression of God’s character. This point is brought out in *Romans 2:17-20*. Paul here says:—*SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.38*

“Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.” *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.39*

In that justly-celebrated work, “The Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul,” by Conybeare and Howson, the last clause of the above text is thus rendered: “Possessing in the law the perfect pattern of knowledge and of truth.” This accurately describes the law, which is such a perfect pattern of truth that whosoever follows it will live a life of perfect truth. It is because it is perfect that it enables the one who is instructed in it to “try the things which differ” (see margin of *verse 18*), or, as Conybeare and Howson render it, to “give judgment upon good or evil.” *SITI August 10, 1891, page 235.40*

It is impossible for mortal tongue ever to express, or even for mortal intellect ever to comprehend, the breadth, the beauty, and the perfection of God’s law. There is in it abundant food for meditation both day and night; and the more we learn of it, the more we can appreciate the Psalmist’s glowing descriptions of it, and his exhortations to continually study it. But as man, by searching, can never find out God so that he can fully comprehend all his attributes, so no man, even when glorified and made immortal, can ever exhaust the law of God. On earth, as we meditate in the law, we can only exclaim, “Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” and in heaven, even to the countless ages of eternity, as in the glory of his presence we are permitted to look with unveiled eyes upon Him whose character is portrayed in the ten commandments, our wonder will not cease, and we can only join with the angelic beings that support his throne,

in saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!” E. J. W. *SITI August*
10, 1891, page 235.41

August 17, 1891

“Jurisdiction of the Law” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 33.

E. J. Waggoner

We have already anticipated this division of the subject, and have shown, by the extent of the gospel commission, that the law of God has been known and transgressed by men in every part of the world; that, as the gospel is to be preached in all the world until the coming of Christ, sin will exist just as extensively, and just as long; and that, consequently, the law, of which sin is the transgression, will be binding in all the world till the end of time. We wish, however, to carry the subject a little further. *SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.42*

The apostle says that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,” and that he has committed the carrying on of this work to his ambassadors-the ministers of the gospel-who, in Christ’s stead, pray the world to be reconciled to God. *2 Corinthians 5:19, 20*. Now, reconciliation implies a previous condition of enmity; and, if the world needed reconciling to God, it was because the world was at enmity with him. And since the work of reconciling is still being carried on, it follows that the rebellion, or enmity, still exists. Then the question arises, In what does that enmity consist? The same apostle tells us: “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; *for it is not subject to the law of God*, neither indeed can be.” *Romans 8:7*. Men are rebels, because they are in opposition to God’s law. And this is the same truth that had been uttered, centuries before, by the inspired prophet: “Now to, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever; that this is a *rebellious people*, lying children, children *that will not hear the law of the Lord*.” *Isaiah 30:8, 9. SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.43*

This brings out again the fact previously stated, that the gospel announces, and carries on its forefront, the law. It was the transgression of the law that made it necessary for Christ to come to reconcile men to God. And as men by continued sin, lost their sense of its heinousness, and of their obligation to God, it became

more and more necessary that the gospel, in announcing to men the way of pardon and reconciliation, should make known their need of such reconciliation and pardon by setting forth, in plain terms, the law which they had transgressed. This is what is plainly stated by Peter, when, after quoting Isaiah's tribute to the enduring nature of the law, "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever," he adds, "and *this* is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." ¹ *Peter 1:24, 25. SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.44*

The quotations made from John Wesley and Bishop Simpson are in harmony with this conclusion. Indeed, the conclusion is so nearly self-evident that it must be reached by all thoughtful, candid minds. The very fact that a pardon is granted, attest the authority of the law; and before a pardon can be granted, the individual must know and acknowledge his guilt. If a man thinks himself righteous, he will indignantly spurn any offer of pardon, even though he may really stand in need of it. Human nature would leave such to the fate which their own blindness and stubbornness deserve; but God loves the world, and desires that all men shall accept his pardon, and thus be reconciled to him; and therefore he takes pains to bring men to a sense of their sinful condition, so that the pardon which he offers may be accepted. The same messenger who is commissioned to announce the pardon, proclaims the law of God, which awakens the self-confident sinner, so that he may appreciate his lost condition. *SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.45*

Let me look still further into the matter of the extent of the law's jurisdiction. Read *Romans 3:19*: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." The law speaks only to those who are within the bounds of its jurisdiction; it cannot condemn any who may walk contrary to its provisions, if they are outside of its limits. For example, a man in Russia may commit an act which is forbidden by the laws of the United States; yet he cannot on that account be declared guilty, simply because the United States law has no jurisdiction in his case. He is not amenable to it. But, as a consequence of what the law of God says, all the world are found

guilty before him. This, again, shows conclusively that all the world are in duty bound to keep God's law.*SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.46*

There are no exceptions to this fact. We have before learned that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), and that "where no law is, there is no transgression" (*Romans 4:15*); and therefore we know that wherever we find sin, there must also be the law. To whomsoever sin is imputed, upon him the law has claims; for "sin is not imputed when there is no law." *Romans 5:13*. Now we find these statements in the third of Romans: "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one;" "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." *Verse 9, 10, 23*. Here the apostle descends to particulars, and shows that not to the Jews alone, but to Gentiles as well, is sin imputed, thus proving beyond all controversy that the Gentiles as well as the Jews are under the jurisdiction of the law of God, and have violated it.*SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.47*

Our investigation of the law began with the time when it was given on Mount Sinai; and we must therefore now examine to see if that was the first of its existence. And here, as in all our study of the law, we find help from our knowledge of the fact that the law is "the righteousness of God." Then it must necessarily have been in existence before the exode. Since it is a transcript of God's character, it necessarily follows that its existence is coeval with the existence of God.*SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.48*

"But," it may be objected, "the law, as a manifestation of God's righteousness, might exist without being transcribed for the government of mankind." So it might, if there were no creatures to whom it could be made known, or if there was any time after creatures had been brought into existence when God did not exercise government over them. But it is not for us to speculate on the state of affairs when God dwelt alone, inhabiting his own eternity, before the existence even of the "sons of God" that shouted for joy at the creation of this earth; and there certainly has never been a time since intelligent creatures were formed, either in heaven or on earth, when God was not supreme ruler. No created

beings have ever been independent of his control. But if God has always been ruler, he must have had some rule of government, and that could be nothing else than his righteousness-his law. The ten commandments are righteousness; they are perfect, holy, just, and good, and therefore fitted to be the rule of a righteous and just government. Then, from the very nature of the law, we would conclude that it was binding on men before it was spoken from Mount Sinai. We shall shortly recur to the argument broached in this paragraph, but first we wish to show from positive evidence that the law of ten commandments is known by men, and was binding on them, before the giving of it on Sinai.*SITI August 17, 1891, page 235.49*

In *Romans 5:12* we read that “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Here the apostle shows that death is a consequence of sin; death came into the world because there was sin in the world. If there had been no sin, there would have been no death, and wherever death is found, it is positive evidence that sin exists. With this passage we may well place *1 Corinthians 15:56*: “The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.” Here death is represented as a cruel monster that has brought many people into its power. It has poisonous fangs with which it strikes its victims, and these fangs, this sting, is sin. Let the fangs be drawn,—let sin be obliterated,—and death’s power would be gone. But “the strength of sin is the law.” “Sin is the transgression of the law,” and it is the violated law which provides death with its powerful sting. Were it not for the law, death would have no sting, that is, it would be powerless to destroy. So here, again, we have proof that wherever death is, there is the law also.*SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.1*

We read on: “For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” *Romans 5:13, 14*. Here we have the statement that until the law, that is, until the time of Moses, when it was spoken from Sinai, sin and death were in the world: therefore, we know that the law was in the world. And hereby we know that the expression, “until the law,” does not indicate that the

time so specified was the first existence of the law; for both sin and death were in the world before that time, and neither can exist without the law, and the law violated. *SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.2*

Let us go still further into particulars. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 *John* 3:4), and "sin is not imputed when there is no law" (*Romans* 5:13). But sin was imputed to Cain (*Genesis* 4:7, 8), and consequently the law was there to condemn. Turn to the commandments, and you will find that the sixth commandment was the one especially transgressed. *SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.3*

Again we read that "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." *Genesis* 13:13. "Sin is not imputed when there is no law," and consequently we know that God judged the Sodomites by his law. If he judged them by his law, of course they knew of the existence of that law; otherwise their punishment would have been just; but we may be sure that the "Judge of all the earth" will do right. *SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.4*

Take the case of the sons of Noah (*Genesis* 9:22-26). Here we have direct evidence that the fifth commandment was known; that it was violated by Ham, the young son of Noah, and kept by the other two; and that the one was cursed for his sin, while the others were blessed for their observance of the commandment. These things show the existence of that commandment, a knowledge of its existence, and also a knowledge that it was in full force to condemn the guilty and to acquit the innocent. *SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.5*

We find also the violation of the eighth commandment mentioned in *Genesis* 31:30. It is not necessary to particularize concerning each of the commandments, but we will notice one more. In *Genesis* 15:15, 16, we read these words of the Lord to Abraham: "And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they [his seed] shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." This shows that in the days of Abraham the inhabitants of Canaan, the Gentiles, were guilty of iniquity. Iniquity is sin, and "sin is the transgression of the law;" so, therefore, the Amorites had the law of God. Turn now

to *1 Kings 21:25, 26*, and you will learn of what the Amorites were guilty:—*SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.6*

“But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.” *SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.7*

Here we find that the Amorites were cast out of Canaan because of idolatry,—idolatry, which, in its rites, involved the violation of not only the first and second commandments, but of all the ten. So we find that all the commandments were known and violated hundreds of years before the Jews came to Mount Sinai, and before there ever was a Jew. The point has not been proved, both from the nature of the law, and by actual illustration of the fact. E. J. W. *SITI August 17, 1891, page 259.8*

(To be continued.)

August 24, 1891

“Jurisdiction of the Law. (Continued.)” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 34.

E. J. Waggoner

Thus far we have shown the existence of the law of God from the earliest history of mankind. We wish now to carry the argument a step further, as we have already intimated that we should do. We have found the law to be “the righteousness of God,” the rule of his government. Since God has always been supreme ruler, and his rule has always been just and righteous, he must have judged only by his own righteous character, which is embodied in the decalogue. Now God has created many worlds besides this one (*Hebrews 1:2*), and since he formed ours that it might be inhabited (*Isaiah 45:18*), the conclusion is legitimate, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, that he made the others for the same purpose. No thinking person can suppose that this little earth, one of the smallest among the innumerable planets of the universe, is the only one that is inhabited. Now of all these vast worlds, God is the King. “The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.” *Psalms 103:19*. And since he can rule by naught except justice and righteousness, and all righteousness, even the righteousness of God himself, is comprised within the ten commandments, it follows that they, and they alone, form the rule of action in all God’s universe. Of the correctness of this conclusion we have direct evidence in *Psalms 103:20*, where we read that the angels “do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.” If the commandments are the rule in heaven, where God himself resides, certainly they are the rule “in all places of his dominion.” *SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.9*

This view of the law, and we are confident that it is a just view, lifts the law question far, far above the plane on which its opposers would fain confine it. Instead of being imperfect and not calculated to bring man into proper relation to his Maker, it is the righteousness of God; instead of being confined to a small portion of this earth, the bounds of its jurisdiction are as extensive as the universe; instead of being given to one nation of earth, and to that alone, it is that to which all loyal creatures, even the angels of

heaven, bow in humble allegiance; and instead of being limited to a few centuries of existence, it “stands fast forever and ever,” even as long as God exists and his kingdom ruleth over all.*SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.10*

We are aware that at first sight many will think that this is going too far, and will possibly raise objections, and say that when we consider the nature of certain commandments, it is not reasonable to suppose that they could be in heaven for the restraint of heavenly beings. We will therefore add one or two more points. But first we would remark that when a case is supported by positive evidence, we are not at liberty to reject it because there are points about it which we do not understand. Nothing can be proved so clearly that no one can raise an *objection*, or even frame an argument, against it; and many things that are susceptible of the clearest proof, cannot be fully comprehended even by those who present the proof. Take, for instance, the question of the existence of God. Both nature and revelation plainly teach that there is a God, who has existed from eternity; yet it is impossible to state the case so clearly that no one can cavil or raise objections; and there is no one, no matter how clearly he can demonstrate that there is a God, who can comprehend him, or understand how he could exist from eternity. The argument from ignorance is no argument at all. Truth is truth, however great our ignorance of it may be. The merchant sitting in his office can put a question to his agent a thousand miles distant, and receive a reply the next minute. Tell this well-know fact to a savage, and he will not believe you; he cannot comprehend how such a thing can be done, and will present objections and arguments which, to his mind, show the utter impossibility of such a thing. Yet in spite of his ignorance, the thing is true. So there are many things in connection with God and his government which finite wisdom cannot explain, but which we must accept.*SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.11*

Now to further show the reasonableness, nay, the absolute necessity, of the ten commandments existing as a rule for all the creatures of the universe:*SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.12*

1. “The law of the Lord is perfect.” *Psalms 19:7*. Since it is perfect, nothing can be added to it or taken from it without making it

imperfect. If, then, any creatures should be governed by more or less than this law, they would be governed by an imperfect law. But that, of course, would result in imperfect characters, and would further show the Lawgiver, to be imperfect; therefore such an idea cannot be entertained. *SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.13*

2. "The law of the Lord is perfect," because it is a transcript of his will,—his righteousness. Therefore all intelligent creatures must be governed by it. *SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.14*

This has already been stated, but it will bear repetition. Too much stress cannot be laid upon it. Wherever God rules, his will must of necessity be law. That the ten-commandment law, the law out of which the Jews were instructed, is the will of God, Paul shows in *Romans 2:17, 18*: "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and *knowest his will*, and approvest the things that are more excellent [margin, "triest the things that differ"], *being instruction out of the law*." That the ten commandments here referred to, may be seen from *verses 21-23*. Paul, therefore, speaking to a Jew, said, You know the will of God, because you are instructed out of the law. No further evidence is needed to show that the ten commandments are the will of God. Now, since all intelligent creatures must be governed by the will of God, it is evident that they are governed by the ten commandments, unless it could be shown that God changes, having one will at one time and toward one people, and another will at another time and for another people. But this cannot be; for "with him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." *James 1:17*. There is, then, one law for all. *SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.15*

3. There are none who can have a greater interest than the righteous, whether of the redeemed or of those who never sinned, in having the ten commandments maintained as the standard of right. And this for the very reason that it is the standard of right. It is the badge of their loyalty. If there were a place where the ten commandments were not held as the law, the righteous ones would not want to go there; for there would be nothing to show that they were righteous. But enough has been said to prove beyond a reasonable doubt the universality of God's holy law. In all places of God's dominion, rational beings are by this law either justified or

condemned. E. J. W. *SITI August 24, 1891, page 259.16*

(To be continued.)

August 31, 1891

“Jurisdiction of the Law. (Continued.)” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 35.

E. J. Waggoner

While we have been making the claim and proving it, that the law of God covers every possible act or thought, and that no responsible being is outside of its jurisdiction, someone has been looking for the verse which says that the Gentiles do not have the law, but are a law unto themselves. Perhaps this is as good a time as any to consider that text. An answer to it will also involve the consideration of the question why the ten commandments, since they have such universal jurisdiction, were spoken from Mount Sinai only to the Jews. Let us now read the passage above referred to:—*SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.17*

“For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another).” *Romans 2:12-15.SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.18*

A brief examination of Paul’s argument in this chapter will be necessary in order to get a proper understanding of this text. It will be noticed that the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth verses are parenthetical, and are therefore secondary to the main argument. Therefore, in stating the argument, we shall omit those three verses. In the first chapter of Romans, Paul has shown the terribly immoral condition of the heathen world; and in the second chapter he proceeds to show that whoever condemns the heathen, condemns himself, for all are guilty. God, he says, “will render to every man according to his deeds.” To those who patiently persevere in well doing, he will render eternal life; but to those who are contentious, and do not obey the truth (see *Psalms 119:142*), he will render indignation and wrath. And these rewards of good or ill

will be rendered to every man, whether he be Jew or Gentile. "For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." *SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.19*

In the first two chapters of Romans, the apostle brings out the fact, which is plainly stated in the third, that "both Jews and Gentiles" are "under sin," and that "there is none righteous, no, not one." In the passage under consideration, he states that, as a consequence, all who do not repent shall suffer "the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." This will be done without regard to nationality; "for there is no respect of persons with God;" that is, it is not a man's birth, but his character, that gives him favor with God. It is the *doers of the law* whom he justifies, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, and not those who, as did many of the Jews, hear the law, but do not obey. All who sin, whether with the law or without it, shall perish. *SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.20*

In the twelfth and fourteenth verses we have the two classes brought to view—those who have the law, and those who have it not. There is no question but that the Jews had the law; they rested in it (*Romans 2:17*), and by breaking it dishonored God (*verses 23, 24*). And the fourteenth verse tells us plainly that those not having the law are the Gentiles. Before considering their case, we must not fail to note the fact that both the Jews who had the law, and the Gentiles who had it not, had sinned. They were alike guilty before God. *Romans 3:9, 10*. Now "sin is the transgression of the law" (*1 John 3:4*), and "where no law is, there is not transgression" (*Romans 4:15*). Therefore it is beyond controversy that both classes here mentioned had transgressed law, and more than that, had been conscious of the fact, for "sin is not imputed when there is no law." So it is certain that the Gentiles had transgressed the law and that they "sinned without law." How shall we explain this seeming contradiction? Let us see. Read again *verses 14, 16*:—*SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.21*

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law

unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.” *SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.22*

When God made man in his own image, he made him upright. *Ecclesiastes 7:29*. Not alone in his physical form, but also in his moral nature, he was in the image of God. While Adam continued in this upright, sinless condition, the law of God was in his heart. We know this from *Psalms 40:8*, where David, speaking for the Messiah, says, “I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” The existence of the law of God in the heart is manifested by the willingness to obey that law; and he who, as was the case with Christ, has the law perfectly formed within his heart, will render perfect obedience to the law. This was the case with our first parents in the garden of Eden. *SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.23*

But man fell from his high estate; he sinned against God, and thus marred the perfect copy of the law which had existed in his heart. The tendency of sin is to multiply itself; like the tares sown among the good grain, it will grow without any attention. So the first sin prepared the way for many more, till at last nearly all the world became wholly given up to sin. In *Hebrews 3:13* the apostle says that men become “hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;” that is, the more men sin, the less heinous does sin appear to them, until at last evil appears to be only good, and good evil, and they sin without the slightest compunction of conscience. This principle is something with which everybody is familiar. Now this progressive love of sin, and the indifference to it, is nothing else than the obliterating of the copy of the law which exists in a more or less perfect state in every heart. This work is not done instantaneously; it takes time for men to so completely obliterate the law from their hearts that they will feel no restraint. But when it is entirely gone, then man is in the condition in which he was just prior to the flood, when “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” *Genesis 6:5*. So long, however, as any portion remains in his heart, the Spirit is enabled to strive with man, and, by means of that law, to convict of sin; and this whether the individual knows anything of the written revelation or not. *SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.24*

Now the Gentiles did not have the law written on stone and in books, as did the Jews; they only had that portion which still remained unobliterated from their hearts. Of course the Jews, having much more light than the Gentiles had, were far more responsible. The former would necessarily be judged by the fullness of the law, for they could not plead ignorance of any portion of it. If they sinned, justice required that the condemnation of the law should be visited upon them in full measure. But the Gentiles could be judged only by the light that they had. Since they had not the written revelation, that, of course, would not be brought up against them. They knew, however, the difference, in many things, between right and wrong; and by this they are judged. Had they lived fully up to the light which they had by nature, they would have been counted as doers of the law; but since they did not, since their own consciences condemned them, they must suffer the consequences. The Jews, having the written law, are judged by the law; and the Gentiles, not having the written law, perish without being brought into judgment by it. *SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.25*

Perhaps this can be made plainer by illustration. The Jews had every one of the ten commandments in such shape that they could constantly be reminded of them, and know the extent of their claims. Now when they come into judgment, it is no more than justice that the whole law should be held up before them, that the enormity of their guilt may be manifest. But here is a poor, ignorant barbarian, who, we will suppose, knew, by the light of nature, only two precepts of the law,—that it is wrong to kill and to commit adultery. His knowledge of the sinfulness of these acts is shown by his trying to conceal the fact when he has done one or the other of them. His own conscience accuses him. Now it is not necessary, in order to convict him of sin, that the whole ten commandments be held up beside the record of his life. In the judgment let the two precepts with which he was familiar be recalled to his mind. By these alone he stands condemned as a sinner; and since “the wages of sin is death,” he justly perishes, without ever having seen the written law. Thus we see that all men, whatever their condition, are amenable to, and are to be judged by, the law of God. When Paul says that the Gentiles have not the law, he means that they had not the written revelation, but not that they did not have some knowledge of right and wrong, as defined by the moral law. E. J.

W.SITI August 31, 1891, page 259.26

(To be concluded.)

September 7, 1891

“Jurisdiction of the Law. Why the Law Was Spoken Only to the Jews. (Concluded.)” *The Signs of the Times*, 17, 36.

E. J. Waggoner

Now why was it that only the Jews had the written law? Did the giving of the law to them indicate partiality on the part of God?—Not by any means; “for there is no respect of persons with God.” Before the exode, all the world was on a level, so far as written revelation was concerned. When sin separated man from God so that he could no longer talk with him face to face, then God supplemented the light which men had in their own hearts by communicating with them in visions and dreams given to his prophets (*Numbers 12:6*), and by sending angels to them (*Genesis 22:15*). Had all men hearkened to the voice of conscience, the communication thus opened between God and man would have been sufficient to bring them at last to the state where the law would be perfectly restored in their hearts. This is that which God is still striving to accomplish. *Hebrews 8:10. SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.27*

But men did not care to follow even that portion of the law which they retained in their hearts, and consequently God could not send them more light through his prophets. Thus, “as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a mind void of judgment.” *Romans 1:28*. In process of time, only one family retained the knowledge of God, and all the rest of the world were destroyed for their abominable wickedness. *SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.28*

Within four hundred years after the flood, men had again corrupted their way on the earth, and only Abraham remained loyal to God. He kept God’s commandments (*Genesis 26:5*), and had the determination to command his children and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment (*Genesis 18:19*). In order that the descendants of Abraham might retain the knowledge of God, God called Abraham away from his corrupt associates, and gave him the rite of circumcision, in order that the separation might be complete. This

rite was not designed to be a mark of birth or nationality, but simply as a means of keeping the observers of God's law from the contaminating influence of those who did not regard it; for whenever one of any other nation became willing to separate from his people and keep the law, he also became circumcised. *Genesis 17:12.SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.29*

This precaution served to keep the descendants of Abraham a distinct people through all their wanderings, and to preserve among them the knowledge of the true God. Some from other tribes, getting the light from them, would occasionally turn to the Lord, to keep his commandments, and, becoming circumcised, would be counted as the descendants of righteous Abraham; but the great mass of the world chose to remain in the darkness of heathenism. Thus it happened that when the Lord brought his people from Egyptian bondage, they alone of all the people in the world had a knowledge of God. All the rest could say with Pharaoh, "I know not the Lord." At that time the Lord chose to give mankind his law in a manner so plain that it could not possibly be mistaken, and so that they could always meditate in it in its perfection, even though no prophet were at hand. By this means the Spirit could make greater progress, so to speak, in writing the law in their hearts. But to whom could he speak the law? Only to those who knew him, and would accept the law as coming from him. Therefore he was compelled to give the written law to the Jews, and make them light bearers to the world. The law, when it entered, came to the Jews, not because it was designed for them alone, but because they alone would receive it.*SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.30*

As a further evidence that God was not moved by race considerations, and did not give the law exclusively to the Jews as a nation, we may notice the fact that when the Jews left Egypt, "a mixed multitude went up also with them." *Exodus 12:38; Numbers 11:4*. This "mixed multitude" was composed to Egyptians, and, no doubt, of people of other nationalities. These went along with the Jews, and with them received the law from God at Mount Sinai.*SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.31*

We cannot close this portion of our subject without giving, from the pen of another, the following graphic portrayal of the condition of a

people who should have no regard for the law of God:—*SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.32*

“No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine, so rapidly gaining ground, that God’s law is no longer binding upon men. Every nation has its laws, which command respect and obedience; no government could exist without them; and can it be conceived that the Creator of the heavens and the earth has no law to govern the beings he has made? Suppose that prominent ministers were publicly to teach that the statutes which govern their land and protect the rights of its citizens were not obligatory,—that they restricted the liberties of the people, and therefore ought not to be obeyed; how long would such men be tolerated in the pulpit? But is it a graver offense to disregard the laws of States and nations than to trample upon those divine precepts which are the foundation of all government? When the standard of righteousness is set aside, the way is open for the prince of evil to establish his rule in the earth.*SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.33*

“Wherever the divine precepts are set aside, sin ceases to appear sinful, or righteousness desirable. Those who refuse to submit to the government of God are wholly unfitted to govern themselves. Through their pernicious teachings, the spirit of insubordination is implanted in the hearts of children and youth, who are naturally impatient of control; and a lawless, licentious state of society results. While scoffing at the credulity of those who obey the requirements of God, the multitudes eagerly accept the delusions of Satan. They give the rein to lust, and practice the sins which called down judgments upon the heathen.*SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.34*

“Let the restraint imposed by the divine law be wholly removed, and human laws would soon be disregarded. Because God forbids dishonest practices,—coveting, lying, and defrauding,—men are ready to trample upon His statutes as a hindrance to their worldly prosperity; but the results of banishing these precepts would be such as they do not anticipate. If the law were not binding, why

should any fear to transgress? Property would no longer be safe. Men would obtain their neighbors' possessions by violence, and the strongest would become richest. Life itself would not be respected. Those who disregard the commandments of God sow disobedience to reap disobedience. The marriage vow would no longer stand as a sacred bulwark to protect the family. He who had the power, would, if he desired, take his neighbor's wife by violence. The fifth commandment would be set aside with the fourth. Children would not shrink from taking the life of their parents, if by so doing they could obtain the desire of their corrupt hearts. The civilized world would become a horde of robbers and assassins; and peace, rest and happiness would be banished from the earth."—*Mrs. E. G. White, in Great Controversy, vol. 4, chap. 31. SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.35*

This is just the state of things that would exist, not only in this world, but in all the universe, if the ten commandments were not the universal rule of action. If there be any portion of the universe where the decalogue is not the recognized law, the above paragraphs accurately describe the condition of its society. E. J. W. *SITI September 7, 1891, page 259.36*

September 14, 1891

“The End Approaching” The Signs of the Times, 17, 37.

E. J. Waggoner

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” *Matthew 24:14*. This language occurs in the discourse which the Saviour delivered in answer to the question, “What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” The entire chapter in which these words occur is an answer to this question. The question as to whether or not the Lord will come again is not mooted. There was no uncertainty in the minds of the disciples on this point. They very well knew that the Lord would come to reign over his people; all that troubled them was to know the signs which should precede his coming. These the Saviour proceeded to give. Besides the physical signs in the sun, moon, and stars, which have all been fulfilled, he gave the one which heads this paragraph, and which is now in process of fulfillment. *SITI September 14, 1891, page 259.37*

What is “this gospel of the kingdom”? It is that which our Saviour preached in all his earthly ministry. *Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:14*. “Gospel,” means “good news.” The gospel which is to be preached “in all the world,” “to all people,” is the good news of a Saviour, “which is Christ the Lord.” *Luke 2:10, 11*. A Saviour must save people from something, and so we find that Jesus saves his people from their sins. *Matthew 1:21*. But the wrath of God (*Romans 1:18; Ephesians 5:5, 6*), resulting in death (*Romans 6:23*), is visited upon all sin; so that the salvation of people from sin must also be salvation from the wrath of God, and so it is (*Romans 5:9*). Being saved from sin may be equivalent to being justified by faith, but being saved from wrath is the final and complete salvation from sin and all its consequences. And this is the salvation of which Isaiah speaks when he says that “Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.” *Isaiah 45:17*. It is that salvation which the apostle Peter says shall be brought unto us “at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” *1 Peter 1:9-13. SITI September 14, 1891, page 259.38*

This final salvation is the end or object of our faith. *1 Peter 1:9*. People may talk as much as they please about doing right for its own sake, but the fact remains that if there were to be no future life there would be no incentive to right living. Paul says, that “if in this we” only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (*1 Corinthians 15:19*), and in harmony with this he continues that if there is no resurrection we would do well to eat and drink, and get all the enjoyment we can from this life while it is passing (*1 Corinthians 15:32*). What comfort would it be to a sinner to assure him that his sins are all forgiven, but that there is nothing for him beyond this present life?—None at all. In such a case forgiveness of sins would profit him nothing. So then the preaching of the gospel comprehends not alone the announcement that Christ died for sinners, but that through his death he has brought immortality to light. We believe that no one who has ever professed to preach the gospel has omitted the fact that an eternal inheritance awaits the overcomers. *SITI September 14, 1891, page 259.39*

But this eternal inheritance is “reserved in heaven,” and is to be revealed only “in the last time.” *1 Peter 1:4, 5*. It is only when Christ comes “the second time” that salvation is brought to them that look for him. Christ himself told his disciples (*John 14:1-3*) that he would come again to receive them unto himself so that they might be with him, plainly indicating that they could be with him in no other way except by his second coming. Even though they should die they could not be with him unless he should return. Compare *John 8:21* and *13:33*. And in harmony with this Paul says, “by the word of the Lord,” that “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so [that is, by this means] shall we ever be with the Lord.” *1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. SITI September 14, 1891, page 259.40*

Now what have we found?—Just this: That the gospel brings to view eternal redemption, and that any preaching of the gospel which should omit the future inheritance of the saints would be very incomplete, and that there is no future inheritance for the saints unless the Lord comes again. Therefore we are justified in saying

that the preaching of the gospel necessarily includes the preaching of the second coming of Christ, and that those who ignore or deny the second coming of Christ do not preach the whole gospel. Still further; in the fourteenth of Revelation we read of three messages that immediately precede the second coming of Christ. *Verses 6-14*. The first of these messages announces the hour of God's judgment come, and it and the two which follow give instruction how to prepare for that event. The Third Angel's Message includes both the others, and contains the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,—the sum of all the instruction necessary to make “the remnant of Israel” a pure people, prepared for the coming of the Lord. It is the gospel in its simplicity and purity, and is therefore the gospel just as it was preached by Christ and his apostles. It announces the second coming of Christ, and tells how to be ready for that event. Therefore we confidently affirm that our Saviour's words in *Matthew 24:14* may justly be paraphrased thus: “And the Third Angel's Message shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” We think that no one who has carefully followed this brief exposition can dissent from this conclusion. *SITI September 14, 1891, page 291.1*

This thing,—the preaching of the Third Angel's Message in all the world, to all nations,—is all that remains to be done before the coming of the Lord; and this work will be cut short in righteousness; “because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” *Romans 9:28*. And short indeed it must be, for we *know* from our Saviour's own words that his coming is now so near that he is “even at the doors.” *Matthew 24:33*. The generation now living upon the earth will witness the coming of the Lord with all his holy angels. There is no conjecture about this, no assumption. It is just as true as that Christ is the Son of God. E. J. *WSITI September 14, 1891, page 291.2*

September 21, 1891

“Carest Thou Not That We Perish?” The Signs of the Times, 17, 38.

E. J. Waggoner

The disciples of Jesus were on the sea in a terrific storm. The winds sweeping down from various quarters into the valley of the lake had “lifted up the waves thereof” so that the boat was tossed about like a toy. The men were at their wits’ end, for neither sail nor oar could make any headway against the tempest. The waves dashed over the boat, and beat into it until it was full and in a sinking condition. Destruction seemed to be the only thing before them, when they thought of the Master. Where is he? In the midst of the tumult he is quietly sleeping in the hinder part of the boat. “And they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?” *Mark 4:38-40. SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.3*

As we read the record we cannot help wondering at the reproachful question which they asked Jesus, “Carest thou not that we perish?” Are you so unmindful of us that you can calmly sleep while we are about to be swallowed up by the sea? Is this your care for those who have left all to follow you? Their thought was only of themselves, and they did not stop to consider that he was in the boat with them. In their faithless fright they did not think that if the boat went down with then, supposing that it were possible, it would take him down too. *SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.4*

If they had but allowed this thought to come into their minds, it would not only have checked their selfish reproach of the Master, but it would have calmed their fears; for surely He who made the sea, and to whom it belongs, who “hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm,” could not perish in the stormy waves. The creature could not destroy the Creator. So the fact that Jesus was in the boat was the surest protection that they could have. It was safer in the storm with him than in the calm without him. *SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.5*

Is there not in this a lesson for us? How often when people are in deep distress and affliction,—when the waters have almost overwhelmed them and the proud waters have actually gone over their souls,—they say, “Why do we suffer this? Has God forgotten us? Does not the Master care for our trouble?” Oh, how many, many times has the Master been pained by such words of selfish, faithless reproach from those who call themselves by his name!*SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.6*

But, what are the facts in the case? The Master is actually in the same trouble with them, and, although to them he may seem to be sleeping, and indifferent to their fate, he is suffering as much as they. Listen to the words of eternal truth: “When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not; for I am with thee.” *Isaiah 43:2-5.SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.7*

Do you say that this promise is for those who have perfect trust in God, but that you are too unworthy for it to apply in your case? Not so; remember the disciples in the boat; their fears had drowned their feeble faith, yet the Master was with them none the less. And his promise is that he will be with us; nay, he *is* with us. “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.” 2 *Timothy 2:13*. It is this knowledge of his faithfulness that begets faith in us.*SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.8*

Read also the words concerning the Lord’s presence with his people in the past, and remember that he is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.” “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old.” *Isaiah 63:9*. “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting

arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.” *Deuteronomy 33:26, 27.* *SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.9*

“Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding? He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength.” *Isaiah 40:27-29.* And yet feeble men, who cannot see one moment ahead of them, and who can see only the most insignificant portion of that which is present with them, dare to murmur against God, because they cannot understand his dealings with them. *SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.10*

There is not a human ill but that Jesus knows it. “For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.” *Psalms 103:14.* Not only does he know, but he cares. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” *1 Peter 5:7.* Not only does he know our trouble, as something that he sees, but he actually shares it. He took on him our nature, being made in all things like unto his brethren. Thus he established a connection between us and him, so that whatever affects us affects him. *SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.11*

How, then, can we murmur and complain? How can we fear and be troubled for the future? Is not the Master in the boat with us? Is he not sharing our danger? Do we believe the assurance of his word? Then how can we spend time pitying ourselves? To do so—to murmur at our hard lot, or to wonder why such trials are allowed to come upon *us*—is to disbelieve the Master’s words: “I am with thee;” “I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee.” *SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.12*

And then it is not only that our selfish fears will be forgotten in the thought that Jesus shares our trouble, but we may rejoice in the midst of the storm, knowing that *he* cannot perish, and that therefore while he is with us we cannot perish. Though death itself may come, that need not shake our faith, for he died, and in that

very act conquered death. Even in this we may triumph. For “who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” *Romans 8:35-39. SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.13*

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.” *Psalms 46:1, 2*. Whatever the danger, however great the storm, we may be calm in the confidence that He who rules all things is with us, and so we may say, “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.” *Isaiah 12:2. E. J. W. SITI September 21, 1891, page 291.14*

September 28, 1891

“An Important Question” The Signs of the Times, 17, 39.

E. J. Waggoner

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.” *Matthew 19:16-22. SITI September 28, 1891, page 291.15*

The question asked by the young ruler is one that has been asked by thousands, and one that should interest every person. Life is a boon of inestimable value; men will spend the earnings of years, and travel to the utmost limits of the globe, in order to prolong their lives for a few years. How eagerly, then, should they grasp anything which will lengthen out their lives to all eternity! It is indeed wonderful that so few manifest an interest in that which pertains to their eternal welfare, while they are so zealous for life and happiness for a short time. In this the majority of mankind manifest only the wisdom of the infant who seizes the glittering toy, and rejects the infinitely more valuable bag of treasure. But there are some who are anxiously inquiring, “What must I do to be saved?” and to such the words of our Lord himself on this subject must be of all-absorbing interest. *SITI September 28, 1891, page 291.16*

Having incidentally settled the point of his oneness with God, our Lord immediately answers the question, “What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” He did not say, “You must not do anything,” but said plainly, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the

commandments.” The young man, greatly surprised, asked, “Which?” being a ruler of the Jews, he had, of course, kept the law, and prided himself on the strictness with which he had heeded all its requirements. The strictness of the Pharisees, extending even to the minutest forms of ceremonies, is proverbial. The young man, doubtless, like Paul, lived after the “straitest sect” of the Jews’ religion. We can therefore imagine the astonishment and assurance with which he uttered the word, “Which?” as much as to say: “Why, are there any other commandments? Have you some new ones that are not written in the law? If so, tell me what they are.” Jesus calmly quotes a portion of the ten commandments, as showing the law to which he has reference. The fact that he did not quote all of them is no proof that he did not design that all should be kept. He did not quote the first nor the third, yet no one would argue from this that Christ meant to indicate to the young man that he could worship idols or indulge in profanity and still be saved. He simply quoted enough to show that he referred to that which was regarded by all as the law, and that he had no new commandment to offer. *SITI September 28, 1891, page 291.17*

Before commenting further on the observance of the commandments as the condition of eternal life, or the truth of the young man’s reply in *verse 20*, we wish to briefly notice what this law is. In a matter of life and death it will not do to make a mistake. If the commandments are to be the test of our fitness for eternal life, we must have those commandments so clearly defined that there can be no doubt. Fortunately, this is not a difficult thing to do. In the third month after the children of Israel left Egypt, they came to the wilderness of Sinai. The Lord told them to make certain preparations, for within three days he would come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. *Exodus 19:10, 11*. Nehemiah tells us why he thus came down: “Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments.” *Nehemiah 9:13*. His object, then, in coming down was to give the people laws of truth, good statutes. Besides this, Nehemiah says, “And commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant.” *Verse 14*. If now we can distinguish between the statutes given by the Lord himself and those given through Moses, we shall have discovered that which we

seek-the condition of eternal life.*SITI September 28, 1891, page 291.18*

Returning to Exodus, we find that when the necessary preparations had been completed, the Lord did come down upon Mount Sinai, with fire and smoke, thunders and lightnings, and an earthquake. *Exodus 19:16-18*. In the *twentieth chapter, verses 3-17*, we find the words which the Lord spoke from the mount. In *Deuteronomy 4:11-13* Moses rehearses the scenes of Sinai, and plainly says that the words which God spoke are the ten commandments. But may it not be that there is something besides these? Let us see. In the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses, in the course of his last charge to the people, repeated in substance these ten commandments as recorded in *Exodus 20:3-17*. When he had finished the recital, he said: "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and *he added no more*. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them to me." *Deuteronomy 5:22*.*SITI September 28, 1891, page 291.19*

Of these commandments, Moses said: "Thou shalt teach them unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes." *Deuteronomy 6:7, 8*. That these are the commandments, the keeping of which is the condition of eternal life, is proved by *verse 25*: "And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us."*SITI September 28, 1891, page 291.20*

We have now found the commandments to which our Lord referred. We are not now concerned with the particulars of the laws given through Moses, since the keeping of them is not required. "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" is the question in which we are now interested, and those things not pertaining to this may be passed by. We know what the law is. Next week we will consider the nature of the law, to see why the keeping of it should be able to confer immortality. E. J. W.*SITI September 28, 1891, page 307.1*

October 12, 1891

“Nature of the Law. (Concluded.)” The Signs of the Times, 17, 41.

E. J. Waggoner

In our last number we considered Christ's words, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," and found that the law of God—the ten commandments spoken on Mount Sinai—are the commandments referred to. In harmony with this, we have the words of Christ through the beloved disciple: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." *Revelation 22:14*. We now want to examine this law, in order to learn its character. *SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.2*

First we quote the words of David: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." *Psalms 19:7*. A perfect law, if kept, will form a perfect character. If a man has a perfect character, he is a perfect man, and that is all that God requires of any of us, all that he can require of anyone. Paul also adds his testimony to that of David, and says that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." *Romans 7:12*. And this also agrees with the words of Nehemiah, that the Lord, on Mount Sinai, gave "true laws [“laws of truth,” margin], good statutes and commandments." *SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.3*

This idea of the perfection of the ten commandments is more fully expressed by David in *Psalms 119:172*: "My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness." They are not simply good; they are righteousness itself. We remember that Moses said of these commandments, "they shall be in thine heart," and that we should talk of them at all times. But it is as true of a man now as when Solomon wrote, that "as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." *Proverbs 23:7*. Therefore if a man continually meditates upon a law that is perfect righteousness, he can become righteous. *SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.4*

David says that the commandments are righteousness; but the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, gives us a still deeper insight into

their perfection: "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." *Isaiah 51:6.SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.5*

If any reader fails to connect this verse to connect this verse with *Psalms 119:172*, and thus learn what the righteousness that shall not be abolished is, he can satisfy himself that it is the law of God by reading the next verse: "Hearken unto me ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law." *Isaiah 51:7*. Now that we see that the commandments are God's righteousness, it needs no argument to convince us that they cannot be abolished. Abolish the righteousness of God! It would be equivalent to abolishing God himself. The thing is an impossibility.*SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.6*

It is not, however, to the fact that God's law cannot be abolished that we wish to call your especial attention, but that it is God's righteousness. God is all righteousness-perfection-and therefore the law must be a transcript of his character. God wanted man to be like himself, righteous, but how could poor, fallen man know what righteousness is? He must needs have a perfect guide to direct his actions. God could not associate with men, and thus teach them what is righteousness, for they could not stand even his voice, much less the sight of his person. So he wrote out a description of his character, in words suited to the comprehension of human beings, and committed it to us. Christ tells us that the ten commandments hang from the great principle of love, and God is love. By studying them and obeying them we become like them, or, what is the same thing, like God. We write this with all reverence. We would not be understood that any human being can approach the perfection of God in any particular; but God himself says, "Be ye holy, for I am holy;" and Christ says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." *Matthew 5:48*. We are to become sinless and pure, and even then God in his goodness will be infinitely above us.*SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.7*

But someone may say, "I do not see anything about the ten

commandments worthy to be called a transcript of God's character. It seems like degrading God to say that they are his righteousness." That simply shows that you have not meditated upon them sufficiently to become acquainted with them. Paul says that the law is spiritual, and spiritual things are only spiritually discerned. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him." We see beauty only in that which we love; and Paul says that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." *Romans 8:7*. But when the carnal mind has been subdued, and the man has yielded to the requirement of the law, he can exclaim with Paul, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (*Romans 7:22*); or with David, "O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (*Psalms 119:97*). *SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.8*

The better acquainted we become with God's law, the greater it appears to us. David thought much on the law, and he said, "I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad." *Psalms 119:96*. It is so broad that it covers every act that any rational creature can perform, and every thought that the mind of man can conceive. For Bible proof of this we read: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." *Hebrews 4:12*. There is no sin either of word, deed, or thought which the law of God will not search out and condemn. How necessary, then, that we make it our constant study! As we do not wish to cherish sin, and thus fail of eternal life, we must understand in all cases just what sin is; and to this end let us never cease to pray, with the Psalmist, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." E. J. W. *SITI October 12, 1891, page 307.9*

October 19, 1891

“Perpetuity of the Law” The Signs of the Times, 17, 42.

E. J. Waggoner

It is impossible to discuss one branch of this great subject of the law without touching more or less upon every other branch. So in considering the nature of the law and its relation to the gospel, we have necessarily shown that it must endure forever. We shall now take up this branch more in detail.*SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.10*

The law of God is the righteousness of God. It may not be amiss to review the proof on this point. David, in these words, bears witness to the fact that the commandments are themselves righteousness: “My tongue shall speak of thy word; for all thy commandments are righteousness.” *Psalms 119:172*. Since there is no righteousness but that of God, the commandments must be his righteousness; but we have still more direct evidence. The prophet Isaiah thus contrasts the things of earth with the righteousness of God: “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever; and my righteousness shall not be abolished.” *Isaiah 51:6*. In the next verse he proceeds to tell what this righteousness is: “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law.” Because the law is the righteousness of God, it enables those who are instructed in it to “give judgment upon good or evil.”*SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.11*

The text says, “My righteousness shall not be abolished.” Since there can be no question but that “righteousness” is here used with reference to the law of God, we may properly substitute “law” for “righteousness,” thus: “The earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be forever, and my law shall not be abolished.” This gives the exact meaning, and is no more positive than we shall find stated elsewhere.*SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.12*

God is from everlasting to everlasting. *Psalm 90:2*. As he cannot exist separate from his nature, or, in other words, separate from himself, and the law is the transcript of his nature, it necessarily follows that the law exists from everlasting to everlasting. And since created beings, who are all subjects of God's government, cannot obey an abstract principle, but must have that principle clearly defined, we know that at least from the time that God created intelligent beings as subjects of his government, the law must have existed in written form, or must have been expressed in definite language. And from the beginning of his creation to everlasting ages, it must continue so to exist. *SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.13*

This is exactly what we are taught by the words of Christ in the sermon on the mount. Said he: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill [to ratify, establish, or teach]. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." *Matthew 5:17, 18*. Here two things are mentioned, the law and the prophets. Christ did not come to destroy either one. He came in fulfillment of prophecy, and also to teach the law, which he did in the sermon on the mount. He did not, however, fulfill all the prophecy; for some of it reaches far beyond his first advent. For instance, in *Psalm 89:20-29* we read the following prophecy concerning the kingdom of David, over which Christ, as the Son of David, is to rule:—*SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.14*

"I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him; with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." *SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.15*

In verses 35-37 we read further:—*SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.16*

“Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.”*SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.17*

Here is a prophecy that will be in process of fulfillment as long as the sun and moon endure, even to all the days of heaven. Now the words of Christ are that “one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.” Till all what be fulfilled? Evidently till all the prophets be fulfilled, for he is speaking of the prophets, in connection with the law. Then, in view of the prophecy that we just read, we know that not the slightest change can be made in the law so long as Christ reigns on the throne of David; and that will be throughout eternity. E. J. W.*SITI October 19, 1891, page 307.18*

October 26, 1891

“The Spirit as a Guide” The Signs of the Times, 17, 43.

E. J. Waggoner

When Christ told his disciples that he was about to go away and that they could not follow him, their hearts were filled with sorrow and anxiety. They dreaded to face an unfriendly world alone. He had been their guide and instructor, and they had learned much from his teachings. They knew of no one who could fill his place. Peter had echoed the sentiments of all the disciples when, in answer to Christ's inquiry if they also would go away, he said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” They knew that no one else could do for them what Jesus had done; and the thought of being separated from him was a sad one.*SITI October 26, 1891, page 307.19*

To comfort them, Christ gave them the assurance that he would come again, and receive them unto himself, and that by this means they could again be with him. But even this promise was not sufficient, for there would still intervene a long period during which they would be left alone. How could they do without the presence and counsel of their Lord?*SITI October 26, 1891, page 307.20*

Again Jesus meets the difficulty by promising that whatsoever they should ask in his name should be done for them; and he added, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth.” *John 14:16, 17*. This Spirit was to be sent in his name, and was to take his place until his return. Said Christ, “I will not leave you comfortless [orphans]; I will come to you.” This coming does not refer to his personal, visible coming, when he will receive his people to himself, but to the Spirit which should come in his name. The Spirit was to be their guide, to prepare them for his coming at the last day.*SITI October 26, 1891, page 307.21*

The offices of the Spirit are many; but there is a special one pointed out in this discourse of our lord. Said he: “These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you, but the Comforter,

which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” *John 14:25, 26*. It is as a teacher that the Spirit is here brought to view. *SITI October 26, 1891, page 307.22*

Many persons entertain very erroneous views as to the manner in which the Spirit operates. They imagine that it will teach them something which the Bible does not contain. When certain Bible truths are presented to them for their observance, they excuse themselves from all responsibility in the matter by saying that they are led by the Spirit of God, and do not feel it their duty to do that particular thing. They say the Spirit was given to guide into all truth; and, consequently, if it was necessary to obey that portion of the Scripture, it would have been brought to their notice. The fact that they do not feel impressed to obey, is proof to their minds that there is no necessity for obedience. To such persons the Bible is of no account; they make its truth depend entirely upon their own feelings. And they actually charge God with the inconsistency of authorizing his Spirit to speak in contradiction of his revealed word. The fact that God cannot lie should convince anyone that his Spirit and his word must always be in harmony. *SITI October 26, 1891, page 307.23*

Christ prayed for his disciples, “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” The Psalmist David said, “Thy righteousness, is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.” From these passages we learn that when Christ said, “When he the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth,” he meant that the Spirit would lead them into a proper understanding of that which had already been revealed. He plainly stated this when he said, “He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Many things that Christ said were not understood at the time; but they were made plain by the Spirit after Christ had ascended to heaven. And it is thus that the Spirit teaches us now; it leads those who are humble and teachable into a proper understanding of the written word of God. *SITI October 26, 1891, page 307.24*

Paul gives testimony on this point which is not uncertain. In

Ephesians 6:13-17 he describes the Christian's armor. The following is the concluding portion: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, *which is the word of God.*" Christ said that when the Comforter, the Holy Spirit should come, he would "reprove [convince] the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Paul says that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Both these passages are harmonized by the one quoted from Paul to the Ephesians. The Spirit does indeed convince of sin, but it is by impressing on the minds and hearts of men the claims of God's word. The Bible is the sword, the instrument by which the Spirit pierces the heart, and lays bare its wickedness. The Spirit is the active agent, but the word of God is that through which it works. The two always act in unison. *SITI October 26, 1891, page 307.25*

We should look with suspicion upon any spirit that counsels opposition to the word of God. John tells us that there are many spirits, and that we are to try them. In Isaiah we are told by what we are to try them: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." *Isaiah 8:20*. It is the spirit of darkness that leads me to act contrary to the word of God. E. J. W. *SITI October 26, 1891, page 340.1*

